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SECOND JUDGMENT

OF

BABYLON THE GREAT.

CHAPTER I.

BABYLONIAN SUNDAY.

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, ye shall reverence my sanctuary." THE BIBLE.

To one who makes a first visit from some remote, simple, and primitive part of the country, where nothing is high but the hills and the heavens, nothing bad but the weather, and nothing changeable save that and the seasons, there can be nothing more striking than the contrast which the roar and the rumble and the rattle of the Babylonian Sunday form, to the calm repose of that sabbath, which, in his native locality, was to him, and all about him, a day of rest; and, in this con-

trast, perchance, more than in any other that he finds in the whole circle of his wanderings, he feels the inferiority of the Babylon, and perceives the force of the biting observation of the poet,

"God made the country, but man made the town."

In strict accordance with this difference of origin, the sabbath is the day when the glories of the country shine forth; when there is, as it were, nothing but Nature in her loveliness, and when the mind reverts to that state of innocence and bliss, which, if it ever really existed, has now no permanent dwelling, save in the dreams of poets and lovers. Sunday, on the other hand, is the day when the glories of the Babylon are dimmed, or at least have a veil drawn over them; not a veil of religion, or even of hypocrisy under its name; for the Babylon has a wonderful licence in those matters, and without its having any influence upon his character or fortunes in society, a man may have any one religion, any plurality of religions, or no religion at all, just as his whim, or his interest, or any other motive that may influence such matters, may suggest; and therefore the Babylonian Sunday ought not, in its grand and peculiar characteristics, to be considered as a day of religious observance at all, but as a day upon which ordinary business is suspended in consequence of some incomprehen-

sible explosive force which, upon that day, blows the greater part of the people they hardly know whither, to do they hardly know what.

Instead, therefore, of the Babylonian Sunday leading, as Sunday does in places of retirement, to contemplation and reflection, it is the only day in the week on which one finds it impossible to think. In the country, every object tells a sabbath-day's tale; and be it in field or in forest, in wild or in well-cultivated champaign, it always appears as if the Book of Nature had been purposely left open for your use. The cattle are sent to the fattest pasture, have grazed themselves to repose, or are ruminating in a half dreamy state upon the morning's feast; the horses, freed from the team and the plough, are whisking about and playing all manner of gambols, in gratitude for that liberty and rest which upon this day are given to them. Then, when you approach the little village, you hear not the accustomed sounds: the clicking of the mill is stopped, and there is not a murmur there, save the singing of the water as it dances in pearls from the "waste-shot." The anvil rings not, and the sparks dance not in the smithy, nor do there issue from thence those loud roars of untutored mirth, which make it the delight of the week. There is no rattling din of the shuttle, nor scraping noise of the plane. The chant of the

maiden comes not from the field, nor does the carol of the cobler answer to it from his cottage. At early morn the rustics indulge themselves with some hours of additional repose:—all, save the owner of the farm, who paces over his fields, exults in the success of his former plans, and resolves upon the routine of labour for the week that is begun. The maidens try and re-try their gowns and ribbons, in order that they may make sure conquest while at church, and enjoy in the evening that upland walk and those words of love, which are, perchance, the sweeter the less they are mixed up with the blandishments and the elegance of polished life. The bell at length tinkles the hour of prayer, and the people, leaving their little ones to their lessons and their play, move slowly to that little edifice, which is a jumble of all styles of architecture since the days of the Heptarchy, around which the bones of their ancestors, time out of mind, have been gathered. In that spot of veneration by day, and ghosts in the dark, (whose deeds serve both for newspaper and police,) the rustics assemble for some time before the service commences: the old men point to the green sods that cover the playmates of their infancy, the adored of their youth, or the fellow-labourers of their manhood, and measure out with slow paces the places where they would that themselves should

be laid down for their long repose; the widow stands "alone in her woe," by the grave of her husband, and numbers up the lingering months at the end of which she may calculate upon being with him, both there and in heaven; one class of the boys show their agility by leaping over the tombstones, and another their learning, by attempting to spell and decipher the texts and saws and snatches of rhyme, with which they are inscribed. The "lads" post themselves near the gateways and walks, in order to steal a glance at the "lasses," who, coy and colouring, trot into the church, and only acknowledge the compliment by showing, in their gait, that how much soever coquetry may vary in form in a dairymaid and a duchess, it is always the same in essence.

Thus, how much soever they may be unschooled in written lore, the church-yard has a page which all can read, and by the reading of which every one can find pleasure or profit. Nor is it in these individual occupations only that the Sunday's assembling is of value to the rustics: it is "settling day" for the whole parish; and the various oracles who collect news and wit and wisdom, upon that day put them into circulation. One has been to a market-town some twenty miles distant, and he of course draws around him his anxious auditory. One thus travelled becomes, as it were,

a sort of wholesale dealer in the wonderful; and they who learn of him in the first instance, retail what they have acquired to secondary groups, or to individuals whom they may meet, until a new Sunday shall bring a fresh cargo of marvels.

This constitutes, as it were, the "foreign news" of the village gazette; and in addition to this they have their domestic information, their literature, their accidents, and, according to the fashion and scale of the place, the whole describable places of the world. There are gleams of Apollo there, as glowing and haply far more fresh and warm than any that can pierce their way through the Babylonian fog — physical or intellectual. There are those there who burn to be delivered of the witticism of the week,—the which witticism, though it be different in form, is yet of a metal as sterling as any that is found among the printed dabblings of the day;—and there too are to be found the artist, the schemer, and the philosopher, as well defined in their several and separate characters, as they are in places of greater pretence, and altogether free from that touch and taint of quackery and imposture, which one is so apt to detect in any save the great and thinly-scattered few who reflect glory upon professions, and shame upon professors. The cause is, the rustic seeks glory only; the primary object of the

Babylonian is gain. In the country, man lives by his labour, and whatever of taste or of talent he may possess is his play and his pleasure: in the Babylon, such is the scramble for existence, that all the powers and talents, soul, honour, and all which a man possesses, must be brought to market, and sold, in order to procure daily bread: at least, any one who shall hesitate about the sale of the latter, will find in the same a vast pecuniary disadvantage.

Then comes the service; and though there be none of the fat cherubs and fiery tints which dazzle the eyes and distract the attention in the gorgeous temples of the Babylon,—none of the pealing thunder of the sonorous organ—none of the opera trills and quavers and fugues of the mercenary musician, or the orphan boy, who purchases a dinner and a whipping every day, by tickling the ears of the fastidious upon the Sunday—and perchance none of the hallooing eloquence which has been coursing Barrow or Taylor, at intervals, during the week;—yet in all probability there is, according to the numbers present, fully as much of that which should be the better part of the service in both—hearts free from guile, and hands ready to do good. The dissonant tones of the whole congregation, drawling out the psalms to all tunes and in all keys, and the crazy fiddle, or the "hoarse

pipe and broken tabor," by which what they call time is kept, may be offensive to artificial ears; and the simple homily of the rustic priest, who does not point the canon of his eloquence over the heads of his audience, may be despised by those who admire glossiness of surface more than substantiality of essence; but He, in whose praise the strain is raised, makes no distinction between organ and flute; and the sayings of the village priest can call "the weary to rest," as effectually, as the most opiate tones that ever were measured forth over a velvet cushion.

Then when the service is over, though the same viands smoke not, and the same wines sparkle not, as in the Babylon, yet there is a feast of another kind. Those whom labour has separated for the week, then assemble: the children come round their parents, to tell each their tale, and receive each their counsel; brothers and sisters shake hands; and whatever may be on the table, the family dinner is a feast of love. Then comes the final, the crowning joy to the young,—the saunter, the romp, the glee, all warm, glowing, and of the heart; but all pure and innocent. It is this which the Babylon cannot give, and which all the wealth of the Babylon, great as it is, cannot purchase; and yet it is in quest not of this, but of something that may, in some sort, serve as a substitute, that

the Babylonians whisk about on the Sundays after what they are pleased to call enjoyment. Tired of the activity and din of the city, they seek for the country; but that is so remote from them in space, that they are worn out before they can reach it; and it is so foreign to their knowledge and habits, that they know not how to enjoy it when they do arrive at it. In consequence of this, the Babylonian carries Babylon with him wherever he goes. At home he has nothing but his business, his animal pleasures of eating and drinking, or conning over the news; and thus, when he, on Sunday, escapes from business and from town, it is merely to taste under a tree the same enjoyments that he tastes at home under a gilded ceiling, or a canopy of smoke, as may suit the rank and purse of himself and his associates.

As the Babylonian Sunday has none of the uses of Sunday in the country, so it can have few or none of the appearances; for the church-going being deprived of the external charms, and there being no need of lingering in the church-yard for information, or assignation of any kind, the number of church-goers is reduced to those who go there for devotion, and those who go there for the sake of appearances. The former class do not, perhaps, make up the majority any where; and in the Babylon, the whole construction and habits of society tend to diminish the latter. As has been said, a

man's religion has no marketable value in the general commerce, as it has in small societies where he who does not go to church is pointed at; and thus the reward of formality in this matter being cut off, the formality which is never assumed but for the reward, goes along with it; and, at least in so far as the established churches are concerned, the only inducement, other than love for the service itself, that any man can have, is the hope of being appointed to the honourable or lucrative offices of the parish; and the number to whom this hope can reasonably extend, must, as compared with the whole population, be very inconsiderable.

Another thing which takes off a good deal of the inducement to church-going in the Babylon, is the small share which the doings at the church, and the labours of the preacher, have in the conversation of the people. The Babylonians are not much of a conversing people upon any subject; and upon subjects in any way of an intellectual nature, they are less so than any other people in the world. A sermon that could compete with the newspaper of Monday morning, would need to be one of no common merit or eccentricity; it is doubtful whether any piece of sacred eloquence could abide the test of the price current or the price of stocks; and therefore it is doing no great injury to the average of pulpit eloquence to say, that it would

be defeated on the Monday morning by a police report, or an account of a "dreadful accident," just as that is, in its turn, by the next report or the next melancholy tale. Hypocrisy and curiosity being thus both taken away from the Babylonian church, and the interest of attending there being reduced to a very few, we need not wonder, though the general movements on Sunday mornings be from the Babylon; and though, when the interest of an object or party renders such a step necessary, something other than the mere service should be resorted to, in order to obtain a congregation.

Asylums for orphans and foundlings have been found out to be very convenient institutions. The names sound well, inasmuch as the parties in whose behalf they are instituted have no protectors, or, if they have, these protectors do not come forward openly in their support, and that amounts to nearly the same thing. The directors and managers of such establishments get, for their conduct, praise and approbation, in what may be considered as not a very costly way; for if, as is often alleged, they be also the grand instruments in the filling of the houses which they patronize, then they are gainers in money and reputation as well as in glory. Magdalens fall nearly under the same description. The *bonâ-fide* operation of them is of that kind, the merit of which, as compared with that of rectitude, is said

to be, in heaven, as ninety-nine to one. Of course this is great odds against any thing that could, in any way, be done for the virtuous and well-behaved part of society; and as the Babylonians are admirable calculators of profit, establishments of this kind must, upon the public and ostensible principle, be very great favourites with them. Nor is it absolutely necessary to stop here; for, as the foundling or orphan hospital may be a most convenient place wherein to dispose of an infant, with which one knows not very well what else to do; so the Magdalen may, at times, be just as snug and comfortable a place in which to lodge a mother, when the knowledge of her being such might hurt a man's domestic comfort, or any of his prospects—matrimonial or otherwise.

I am far from taking upon me to say that these are the uses to which the establishments, which have just been mentioned, are, in all cases, in a majority, or even in any case, turned by those wise men of Babylon that watch over them; but they are uses to which, by possibility, they may be turned, and they are profitable ones; and though possibility and profit be not enough to form a demonstrated fact, they are, in all things connected with the Babylon, quite sufficient for the establishment of a reasonable hypothesis, and that is all for which I contend.

The buildings set apart for those institutions

always bear rubric upon their posts, that they are supported by "voluntary contributions." And though I do not mean to insinuate that the relieved as well as the relieving fall within this generous denomination; yet it is clear that this is carved on the stone for the purpose of having its effect upon the public. One of the means taken to produce that effect falls more properly under the description of that which, in the Babylon, is denominated "public charity;" but there is another, which forms one of the features of the Babylonian Sunday. To each of the establishments of this class there is attached a chapel, and every exertion is made to get the pulpit of that chapel filled by a succession of the most popular preachers that can be obtained; and also that the organ and choir shall pour forth the most fascinating music. These attractions do not fail to collect crowded audiences, more especially, I believe, when the service is performed rather late in the evenings; and though, notwithstanding the superiority of music, one should not perhaps be warranted in saying that "heaven is won by violence of song," yet the funds of the institution are augmented, and the people are accommodated and pleased. Those who attend the chapels of these places may be generally considered as belonging to the class of church-goers from curiosity; but as the numbers which those chapels can

contain, are to the whole population in a very small proportion, they must be considered as the exception, and not as the rule; and it may be laid down as a general truth, that that part of the Babylonian population who seek their pleasure on the Sunday, seek it any where but at church.

Among the Corinthian capitals, by which the plain base and massy shaft of Babylonian society are very beautifully, though somewhat incongruously topped and finished, Sunday is very apt to be a day of parties and feasts. With those who are actively employed in the politics of the country, there may be some plea for this,—they must have their relaxations and their amusements, as well as other folks; and, during the time that the houses of parliament are assembling, and when they are occupied in the cabinet the whole of the morning, and in the senate the whole of the evening, the necessity of this ought to be held as a sufficient excuse. But there are others who follow the practice, although they cannot plead occupation on any one day of the week; and these last, not contented with the ordinary routine of pleasure, put the requisite number of professional singers and card-tables into play. The number who habitually do this, is not, however, very great; and report quotes it as being on the decrease. In the beginning of the fashionable winter,

—that is, in the months of February and March, persons of this character whet their appetites, of all kinds, by riding and driving in Hyde Park; but the assemblage is very motley; and though no one can mistake them when near enough, there is some chance that the doxy or the daughter of a money-dealing son of Abraham, may carry off the attention from the fashionable of the first water; and that the frippery of Cranbourne Alley shall out-glare the fashion of Bond-Street. Those who are *vehicular*, are indeed safe; because, though many can purchase attire and equipage, it cannot blazon the escutcheon; and thus that true nobility, which is microscopic, and demands close inspection in the person, is plain enough on the panel of the coach. On horseback, however, there is no such palpable distinction; and with those on foot there may be no distinction at all. Liveries may be sold, or livery buttons may be purchased; and more than once, a dashing courtezan has been found flaunting it on the mall, followed by a footman, whose buttons were chased with a ducal coronet. A satirist would perhaps say, that the following and the bearing were not very much out of character; but I am a plain narrator, and therefore inclined to think that they were.

But if there be those mistakes among "the fair," there are others equally great, if not greater,

among the "*not* fair." The man who dashes upon the finest horse, may have gotten him by cheating at a common gaming-house; he may be just come out of the gazette, or just going into it, as a bankrupt; or he may actually at that moment be a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench. In fact, characters of very opposite kinds are there so blended together, that all the conclusion which it is safe to come to is, that upon these occasions the Park contains an immense crowd, all very fine in appearance, and some of them very fine in reality.

As the winter sets in, and the fashionable day, which is in reality the portion of the four-and-twenty hours which is marked by the absence of the sun, begins to shorten to its minimum,—that is, in the months of May and June, the scene changes, and the Royal Gardens at Kensington collect the variegated squad. It is in vain, however, that fashion tries to shine in the loose glory of its majesty even here; for, in all public places, the counterfeit dogs the reality like a shadow; and though connoisseurs pretend to detect the counterfeit, by a straw from the hackney-coach at the train, dust on the slippers, and some other tests, yet none is infallible, save making the things speak, and that the etiquette of the place of course prevents.

Still, in as far as exhibition goes, this is certainly the most pleasing exhibition connected with the

Babylonian Sunday; and it is one which any man, whatever may be his particular fancy or train of thinking, can contemplate with unmixed satisfaction. The simple admirer of beauty can no where find such a mass of it so free and open to his contemplation; and it is there in all stages, from the opening bud to the withering pod; and really it takes some time to consider in which stage it is the most worthy of admiration. The little sprite, who was but the other day in the nurse's arms, as she hops and trips along, leaving no visible or permanent foot-print upon the most delicate flower, strikes one so forcibly with the beauty of perfect innocence, that, for the moment, one thinks of her and her alone; anon, however, comes the first blush of womanhood, timorous even of the reflection of its own loveliness, and exhibits features so soft and lines so flexible, that you are apt to lose sight of earth, and trees, and sky, and be romancing in fairy-land. Anon, your eye catches some mature spinster, an unfortunate of many offers, none of which suited either her fancy or her pride; and you at once become philosophic, and find yourself baffled with the problem: "When does hope leave the female breast?" The matron too, in the midst of her blooming family, has an air of calmness and consciousness of having done her duty, that is, perhaps, as interesting as any of the

others. Nor can you look with indifference upon that fragment of life—still showing how fine the entire structure must have been—that totters along, supported by the arm of her full-grown grandson, in all the glee and garrulity of a second infancy. The variety is pleasing, because it can never satiate; for when you have wearied yourself with the contemplation of any one, you come with renewed appetite to the contemplation of another; and the mind, in shifting the object of its contemplation from young to old, or from old to young, is invigorated in the same way that the eye is, when it shifts from red to green, or from green to red, or from one to another of any of those which the optical philosophers call accidental colours.

Those who labour to decry in others that beauty which they are conscious of wanting in themselves, or those with whom they are connected, are in the habit of saying that the lustre of female loveliness is best set off, amid the glare of lamps and the glitter of jewels, at an evening assembly; and if the beauty be *put on*, I am ready to admit that it may be true; but he who has seen the beauty of Babylon assembled upon the greensward at Kensington, will admit that a lovely woman looks more lovely than ever, when she is contrasted only with the soft charms of nature, and when her motions are all free, and she herself is the gem.

The Babylonian swains seem to have some innate consciousness that they would gain nothing in appearance by placing themselves side by side with the ladies; and accordingly they remain without, in the Park, on horseback. It may be, indeed, that there is policy in this; and that there is, is rendered probable by the fact, that, where the ladies promenade upon the one side and the gentlemen gaze from the other, the wall is thrown away, and a sunk-fence is substituted. To this fence they approach, making their horses, which are certainly of their kind every way equal to the riders, frisk, and caracole, and leap, till they draw that preliminary attention which seems to be their object. When they have done this, a knot of fair ones are arrested by the manœuvres, by the merest chance in the world, of course. They approach the margin; and one, with a perfect run-away fire of glances at the rider, launches out in ecstatic praise of that "divine creature," the horse; and thus the object is accomplished, unnoticed by the most lynx-eyed mother, or the most wily guardian.

It is not, however, from these, or, indeed, from persons of the higher class at all, that the characteristics of the Babylonian Sunday are to be taken. Those persons have either their minds so cultivated, or are so habituated to idleness and trifling,

that the Sunday hangs no more heavily upon them, than any other day of the week. Those in whom the peculiarities are most striking and perfect, are they who, for the six days, are so effectually ground upon the wheel of business, that they cannot support themselves in an inactive state. The heroes of the desk and the counter, and the more independent of the labouring classes,—generally speaking, these have none of the enumerated motives for going to church, and, in fact, not many of them go. Air and exercise are what their health demands; and it is their mode of taking these, that constitutes the grand peculiarity of Babylon on Sundays.

In consequence of this, every species of vehicle that can be found is put in requisition. Man-milliners' apprentices become equestrians; and gentlemen of the three-footed stool club the savings of the week, or possess themselves of "savings not their own," for the purpose of hiring a "shay" for the day, in which, by the fury and unskilfulness of their driving, they endanger their own necks, and the more valuable lives of pedestrians, till they arrive at one of the village alehouses, upon the front of which shines the inviting invitation, "An ordinary at two o'clock on Sundays." As they have no taste for the country, and do not know a potatoe from a turnip, till they be served up on

the table, and hardly an ox from a sheep, till they have assumed the more familiar forms of beef and mutton; and farther, as driving is to them a much greater fatigue than walking, they ensconce themselves in the first of those retreats that offers, and in the yawning hour that precedes the dinner, they yawn, and loll, and strut, by turns, aping, to the best of their knowledge and abilities, the great man. They keep up the same character during the meal, by finding fault with every article that forms a part of it; and it is not till after the same identical bottle of "made port" has been removed and returned half a dozen times, that it becomes "the real thing now."

Summer is the grand time for these doings; and then there is a general evacuation of the town by land and by water. Family parties are made up; away they row or rattle, all as merry as may be. But what is the cause of their mirth? Is it that they may saunter through the rich meadows, or thread the delightful groves on the banks of the Thames, or drive away the gout from themselves, and the rickets from their children, by whisking about in the keen air of some elevated heath? Not they; there is a large basket in the boat, or the coach, as it may be, and all eyes are intent upon that. Vacancy, incapability of self-occupation, drive them out of the house; but they take good care

to carry along with them that which, had the state of the weather compelled them to remain, would, in anticipation, in act and in consequence, have formed their sole and exclusive occupation,—they take with them their dinner; and, true to the divinity that they worship, that dinner is never for a moment from their thoughts. They cannot be accused of any idolatry with the deities of field, or flood, or forest, or pasture; for to their own god they are as constant as anchorites.

Go to any of their favourite haunts, and you will see the truth; and there is none better for your purpose than that soft meadow which skirts the left bank of the Thames, from Richmond-bridge to Twickenham. The place is worth seeing in itself; and so, if by accident there should be no Babylonians there, your labour will not be lost. On your left, there is the fine view of Richmond-hill, with its rich and healthy villas, now lost, now seen through groves of every tint that leaf or blossom can assume; and broken at intervals by green lawns of the most cool repose, which reach to the margin of the river, and, from the dense foliage by which they are everywhere hemmed in, seem inaccessible in any other way. Skreens of dark cedars cast their shade over the dwelling, a window or two of which barely peeps forth to put you in mind of solitude in the midst of bustle

and throng. Old Father Thames steals softly by, as if he were loth to quit his own dear native valley, to be first stained and polluted by the frowziness of the Babylon, and then lost in the depths of the sea; and ever and anon as he gurgles his "goodbye," he kisses the slender waving arms of his lovely daughters—those drooping willows, which bend so gracefully over his bosom, and flutter their green and silver with so much elegance, whenever a sportive zephyr in the least ruffles their aged parent. The mantle of Nature upon which you tread is unrivalled in its hue and its softness, and the woods and villas that form its boundary, are as tasteful in themselves as they are delightful in their situations. The place is, in fact, an Elysium; and more than anywhere else, the visitant, if there be that in him which vibrates to pure and enchanting impressions, finds a "here could I dwell for ever!" stealing out at the corner of that mouth, which he had opened for no purpose save to inhale the balmy and invigorating atmosphere.

Nor is he at all likely to stop at that ejaculation; for the ground upon which he is, is both enchanted and enchanting. If he look back, (eschewing the incongruous smoke of the steam-boat as he looks,) the slow and ungainly figure of Jamie Thomson, the sweet but sadly diluted songster

of the Seasons, comes into his view, with a motion which makes the head to nod and the hands to droop, till a yawn and a stretch bring them back to half their wonted tone. Jamie "could see nae moteeve for risin'" till "the shadow had gone down ten degrees on the dial;" and then, forth he has paced unwashed and unshorn; and there he creeps along by the garden-wall, heedless of the flowers that are trampled under his hoofs, and with his hands folded behind him, devours on the stems, the outside halves of such peaches as require no stretching or incurvation of his unwieldy bulk: a figure so ungainly, so occupied, so late in crawling out of its hole, and so slow in its motions that, compared with it, the *bradypus* is a grey-hound and the snail an eagle, might at first be deemed equally incapable of thought and of feeling; but when it lights upon a peach of more than ordinary flavour, there comes a throb of life over the whole of it; its eye beams upward, with a warmth and gratitude as rare as they are perfect, and you fancy you hear the ineffable wildness of an Æolian harp bursting forth from the willow tree or the osier bed—

> "These, as they change, Almighty Father! these
> Are but the varied God. The rolling year
> Is full of Thee."

While you contemplate this, your steps become heavy and your feet are, as it were, glued to the sod; your thoughts (for, just as was the case with Jamie when the hand of inspiration was strong upon him, you cannot articulate) dilate—get stuck over with epithets and amplifications, and glide into each other by shades so imperceptible that you lose all clear discernment both of individuals and of distinctions, and would rather loll with Jamie Thomson, in his Castle of Indolence, than undergo the cares of the richest Babylonian, as the price of his wealth.

Nor is it less pleasant to look up the stream; for, across that beautiful expanse of the river, which, from the position in which you view it, has the appearance of a lake, is the site of the favourite retreat of Pope. There he sits with his pen ready dipped in the ink to inscribe upon that "shred of an old letter" before him, one of his most brilliant thoughts,—the which thought he is attempting to elicit by pressing the vein on his left temple with that forefinger which is under his wig, and thus causing the retained blood to act as a stimulus to the superior portion of his cranial organization.

That man who sits doggedly silent in the corner, apparently poring upon a book (which he is not reading,) is Lemuel Gulliver; and under the

guise of that simple and harmless occupation, he is hacking and barbing and envenoming a tremendous intellectual dagger, so that the least scratch of it may be torture and death to the strongest foe. He, again, with the cane, who sits in the middle of the apartment, with so singular a mixture of acuteness and glee in his grey eyes, and some expression upon his lips which is not exactly either a smile or a sneer, is Martinus Scriblerus, come to present a new epigram to the poet, or a fresh argument to the politician. You do not contemplate them with the same heartiness of feeling as you did the peach-eater, behind you; but they may be of more service to you in a matter of more practical importance—knowledge of the world.

Such a scene and such recollections might, one would suppose, break through almost any merely animal propensity; but any one who may be disposed to bend his steps that way on a fine Sunday morning in July or August, will find that they cannot. Close under the bank he will find, it may be, fifty Babylonian boats, glittering with varnish and gold, and gaudy with streamers; and fast by, upon the land, as many parties, who, after a walk of three yards upon the average, have spread their table-cloth upon the green, converted the cushions of the boat into ottomans, and are delving at cold fish,

flesh and fowl, with their whole bodily powers—and "all their souls" in supplement. To all the scenery around, they are perfectly oblivious. The hill, the houses, the trees, the river, the meadow, Jamie Thomson, and the Scriblerus Club, are nothing to them; their sole ideas of pleasure are confined to emptying the basket and the bottle; or, if the very young ones give a hop or two upon the grass, while those of maturer years are finishing the liquids, their peregrinations do not, altogether, range over a space of twenty yards. Then they betake themselves to their boat, and row and ride homeward to the Babylon. It frequently happens, however, that toward evening the wind freshens from the east; and then they have to chequer the tale of the day's pleasure with something which, to them, has all the horrors of a "south-easter off the Cape," or a tiffoon in the Chinese sea. The waves are up on Chelsea Reach (*quasi* 'retch?') and the cup of horror is, for the moment, full. Ill prepared for the rocking at any rate, they increase it by their fears; and though the number of fatal accidents be, fortunately, not great, the number of those who have been soused in this sea of Babylonian troubles, is far from being inconsiderable.

A full description of the Sunday out-door doings of the Babylonians, would fill more space than I have allotted to the whole city, and would not be in-

teresting in proportion to its extent. Substantially, they are all the same; for be the place or the mode what they may, eating and drinking are always the real pleasures,—from the bloods that eat white bait and drink champagne at the Crown and Sceptre, Greenwich, down to the man who, driven by his spouse, drags a brace of children at his heels, has a third one horsed across his neck, and finds "a bit of pleasure" in gnawing a crust by a hedge-side and moistening it with twopenny worth of such stuff as is vended at a hedge alehouse;—the causes are still the same—inanity at home, and incapacity for rational enjoyment abroad; and these are secondary causes,—the natural and necessary results of that exclusive devotedness to a single object, which is at once the spring of all the good and all the evil which are peculiar to and characteristic of the genuine natives of the Babylon, and with which a stranger must get inoculated, if he hopes in their fashion to "thrive" in a locality of physical plenty and mental desolation.

To win back these wanderers to the path of church-going, or to increase the numbers and influence of the clergy,—to make each rector of a large parish a kind of diocesan,—or to accomplish some other object, the precise nature of which is deeper than my divination,—church-building has been resorted to. But though this has given scope

to a great deal of bad taste in the way of sacred architecture, with a slight sprinkling of good taste here and there, its moral influence does not appear to be very considerable. That may easily be perceived from what has been already said. The grand desideratum in the Babylon is a disposition to go to church; and to hope to produce that by an additional number of churches, would be hoping contrary to the rules of all practice both ancient and modern. The Sibyl did not go about to enhance the value of her prophetic leaves, by doubling or tripling their number; no, she kept burning them, and asking the more the fewer that were left. In like manner, when any article palls upon the taste of the times, tradesmen do not attempt to bring it again into fashion, by filling their shops with it; they take the opposite plan, and try to make it valuable by making it scarce. The Sibyl's leaves may have been an imposture; the commodity of which the value is enhanced by making it scarce, may be a thing conducive only to human folly or vanity; and religion is divine, and ministers to man's happiness, in a peculiar and pre-eminent way. Granted: but then the instruments by which religion is held forth, and the powers in man to which its forms and ceremonies address themselves, are all just as human as those that relate to any mere worldly matter; and therefore,

if the value of those forms and ceremonies is to be augmented in the opinion of the people, some other means than making them more common must be adverted to. The new church may accommodate some of those in whom the disposition previously existed; but in order to create that disposition which was not created by the old one, it must possess some attraction which the old one wanted; as, finer decorations, or, which would answer the purpose better, a more eloquent preacher.

The fact is, that the new church has fewer attractions than the old one. Time consecrates churches far more than any bishop; and as the mist of years thickens over their origin, and the events that are connected with them, they gain far more in dimensions than they lose by dimness. For instance, one can remain gazing at the fine old structure of St. Saviour's (strange coupling of title and name!) in the Borough, till one's reflections, creeping backwards into time, steal across the bourne of recollection altogether, and then one's thoughts are in what most men call the eternity of the past; but though one were to gaze for twenty years upon the finest of the new churches, one should be put in mind of nothing but bricks and mortar. Another thing,—the new churches want the substantiality of the old; they are mere accommodations, under the suffrage of the incum-

bent in whose parish they are, and not parish churches. Besides, there is in the architecture of most of them something that offends one's taste, whether that taste may happen to lean toward the simple beauty of the Greeks, or the more complicated style which the Germans are said to have borrowed from the branching oaks in their forests. They will have steeples to the Grecian temples; and as a steeple formed no part of the model, it mars the congruity of the imitation. The idea that the two together suggest is that of a watchman's rattle,—as though you should take hold of the steeple, invert the whole, and swing it round. The notion is not inapt as respects the real use of a church; but it has none of the grave sublimity about it that should always be suggested by an edifice devoted to the purposes of religion.

In proof of the assertion that something attractive on the part of the preachers is the only thing that would increase the propensity for church-going, we have only to appeal to the facts as they are found among the various classes of Dissenters, with whom the sons of old mother church have to grapple, in doctrine and popularity, though not in tithes and fees, within the Babylon. It would not signify much what the peculiarity were; for, in spirit, Babylon is just the same now as it was when Orator Henley dispensed his "Primitive Eucha-

rist;" drew crowds upon a promise of showing how any man might make a pair of new shoes in two minutes; and fulfilled his promise by cutting off the legs from a pair of boots. From what one every day sees, curiosity has only to be excited, and then there is no want of an audience. Unless where genius of the very first order bursts forth, there is hardly any thing in the common routine of preaching that can excite curiosity; and as the beneficed Babylonians are, by their characters, or (which is nearly the same thing) by the independence of their livings, elevated above (the necessity of) any thing like quackery, it is not often that one of them very much overtops his brethren in the general estimation of the public. They are a kind of luminaries—moons—of which all the phases and changes may be computed and set down in the Almanack. Among the Dissenters, however, there are erratic bodies constantly shooting up for their day, and dropping as fast into their night. In those it is not worth that gains the crowd; it is something unusual,—oddity of appearance, wildness of gesture, hardihood of assertion, delinquency, or any thing by which, either for the better or the worse, they may differ from others. If one were to hold forth in armour, he would collect a crowd; but that crowd would leave him and follow one who should preach riding at a gallop.

CHAPTER VI.

BABYLONIAN CHARITY.

"Charity covereth a multitude of sins."

THERE is not in the whole compass of recorded writing, a greater truth—a wider truth, as one would say—a truth embracing a greater number and diversity of subjects, than the one contained in that short sentence. But the truth does not follow the gloss of ordinary commentators. The *sin-covering* charity is not the ἀγάπη—the στοργὴ—the φιλοστοργία—the φιλανθρωπία, which, from the earliest period of man's history, has been warming, and improving, and blessing the world; it is the mere *stips*—the farthings, as it were, which the rich dole out of their wealth, (sometimes through fear of hell from the way in which they got it,) and cast to the poor, with an air and a feeling that have nothing either of ἀγάπη or φιλανθρωπία about them; but which, even while the farthing is *in transitu*, tell, as plainly as pantomime can tell, that the

giver *charitably* wishes the receiver at the devil. It is a mere almsgiving which, like the dew from the poison tree, blisters him upon whom it falls—him who is by any casualty driven to take shelter under that which distils it. This is the charity which covers many sins; and it covers them much in the same way that impudence covers the face of an impostor—with brass.

Though the interpretation by the commentators be very different from the truth, yet that truth is plain from the text itself. This, by the way, is the case with texts and commentaries upon very many subjects, religious, philosophical, and civil; the doctrine is in the original text plain and palpable enough, but it is buried under the earth, the dust and rubbish of the commentary. Thus, nothing can be more plain to the understanding, even of unlettered men, than common justice and equity. The rising of the blood always tells an unsophisticated man when he sees others violate them, and the pinch of the conscience fails not in letting him feel when he violates them himself; but if you wish to find them in the books of the law, you must hire a man who has made those books his study, till he has lost the substance in the form; and that which you get from him has only one value—it warns you against a second application to the same quarter. Other instances could

be given; but in giving them, I should myself become a commentator, practise the doctrine against which I preached, and be the example of that which I blamed. Therefore, to the text.

The charity to which it alludes, is not said to *prevent*, or *pardon*, or *remove* the sins, or to do any thing that even tends to correct the mischief that they produce, in the way of atonement, satisfaction, or reparation; it merely *covers* them, clokes them up; and, keeping them from the corroding influence of public opinion, enables the possessor to practise them under the mantle, and get credit in public for being a most pure, upright, and warm-hearted individual.

Upon the hypothesis that there are more sins to cover in the Babylon than in any other place, one arrives very naturally at the conclusion, that there should be more charity to cover them; and reasoning, *à posteriori*, from the quantity of charity, we equally establish the probability of a corresponding abundance of sin. I know not whether a doctrine which, like this, can go with either end foremost, be or be not perfectly sound and philosophical; but I do know, and any man capable of putting two and two together, and satisfying himself that the sum is neither three nor five, may know, and indeed cannot avoid knowing, that, both in a moral and political point of view,

this same sin-covering charity is itself a greater sin —a more grievous infliction—than any of those sins the multitude of which it clokes up from the public view, and fosters and augments in private.

Without going into any argument about the mode of its operation, the bad tendency of alms-giving might very fairly be inferred from the states of society in which it is most in favour; for they are invariably the worst states—the lowest and the most ignorant. Sin-covering charity was the instrument by which the monastic orders, in former times, possessed themselves of all the fat places of England; built palaces, while the people dwelt in hovels, and wallowed in luxury while these were in penury and want. The vice and profligacy of the cloister were proverbial; but the holy fathers gave largesses to the beggars whom their systems had made; and, under the mantle of that, their own vices, as well as those of the mistaken and abused people whom they piously fed out of the labour of the said people—out of that which, if there had been natural justice in the case, the monks should have been getting instead of giving—lay snug and holy.

When the unholy cupidity of the King laid its grasp upon the holy heritages of the pious fathers, the whole of the evil did not cease with them. It could not, indeed, be supposed that the result of

that measure would be unmixed good, because the motive that prompted it was a bad one—a desire on the part of those in temporal power to hold spiritual power also,—to be able to award eternal damnation in supplement to the scourge, the gaol, and the gallows. It so happened, however, that this was a power which the temporal authorities could not manage. That which holds the opinions of men in any other course than that into which they would fall by the natural operation of common sense, must be ubiquitous as well as incessant; and no espionage has ever been able to give this ubiquity to temporal power over opinion. Under a cruel and despotic system, espionage may do much; it may control the actions of men, and it may restrain the expression of their opinions to a certain extent; but espionage can never reach the formation of opinions, and, when opinions are once formed, their circulation cannot altogether be prevented. But that prostitution of religion which works, not for the good of those to whom it is preached, but for the selfish purposes of him who preaches it, attacts the formation of opinion. The terror of the law, however cruel or unjust that law may be, lies within its own pale; and when a man is out of the knowledge of the tyrant and his emissaries, the mind is free. The chain of superstition is, on the other hand, always

worn; and not only that, for it is most severely felt in secret. Hence, the headship of the church —not a mere complimentary title like that of the very gracious Sovereigns of England, but a *de-facto* popedom, such as that which was grasped at, in the first instance, by Henry—is that which is demanded in order to make regal despotism complete and everlasting. To this there have been approximations, but it has never absolutely been reached; and, fortunately for the world, it does not appear to be, in the nature of things, absolutely attainable.

Some thanks are therefore due to those who were the original causes of beautifying the country with those ruined abbeys, which are so valuable to our tourists, and limners, and romancers; and we of these modern times owe even some little thanks to the holy men, by whose craft the funds, out of which the said abbeys were built, were raked together. Yes, now that they are fairly in ruins, we may thank the holy brotherhoods, because without them we should not have had these pretty things to look at. An abbey, with its echoes and its ivies, not forgetting its owls, its mottoes and its legends, with here and there a sprinkling of ghost and miracle to season the whole, is really a very pretty thing to look at, on a fine autumnal day, when the diminution of evaporation has given the air its

delightful transparency, and the trees, feeling, like so many mature coquettes, that their vernal freshness is gone, go about to paint themselves in all those gaudy hues that are the proper privilege of beauty in its dilapidation and decay. One admires the fertile and sheltered situation, the aged stumps of what once were the choicest fruit-trees in the country; one feels hunger all but satisfied in passing through the admirable arrangements of the kitchens, and cellars, and refectories, and butteries; and there is a holy tranquillization in the idea that the whole cost and danger of the thing have gone by,—that it is not a living pest, but a lovely monument. There are also more recollections, more of the elements of that chit-chat which is as oil to the wheels of life, about an abbey, than about almost any thing else; and be it in reality or in painting, there is always something companionable about it. Even on a skreen, which a fair one holds as a barrier, or a sort of neutral ground between the rival fires of her own eyes and that which is in the chimney, an abbey is one of the very best delineations that can be traced. Queens of Love, and Cupids, and Apollos, and even shepherds and shepherdesses, may lead the mind, not in such a case, of course, to any thing that is unholy or improper, but still to thoughts which lean much more to the ways and workings of this world than

to that celestial abstraction which the wise hold to be the *summum bonum* of innocence and grace. But with an abbey before her eyes, her meditations cannot choose but be all of celestial things, abstinences, prayers, and the gentle beams of the cold moon streaming in pencils of silver, through clustering foliage and fretted arches.

But while the ruin has these uses to minds abstracted from the thorny paths of vulgar utility, it preaches so useful a homily to the public, that he who should demolish one (ruined) abbey, would do more serious harm to the cause of public liberty, than he who should disfranchise all the boroughs in Cornwall. Those ruins are buoys upon the banks, and beacons on the rocks of superstition, and tell, in a language that all can read, what should, with the utmost care, be avoided. Think on it how one will, the engine, at which Harry clutched so eagerly that he put it past repairing, is pleasing or profitable in its present state; and we cannot help rejoicing that the sins which the cloke of charity covered there are gone.

Still, as the Scotch say in their mongrel pun upon the construction of their two apartmented hovels, "There is no getting at the *bien* without the *but*;" for though the sins which the mantle of almsgiving covered in the monastic days have gone to the limbo of their perpetrators, the mantle

which covered them, remains as large as ever, and covers as largely the sins of others.

The length of time that these pious almsgivings were practised, the holy and pure reputation of the men by whom they were carried on, and the natural disposition which people have, not to work if they can by any possibility be fed in idleness, gave both to the rich and the poor in England very erroneous notions of the nature, value, and effect of almsgiving, and ripened those wrong notions into very inveterate habits, of which they have not yet got rid, and do not appear to be even in the way of doing it.

The foundation upon which these inveterate habits rest (and it is for the purpose of getting at that foundation, that I have inflicted upon the reader this digging among the monastic ruins) is a notion of almsgiving, the very opposite of the true one. To give to folks what they give no equivalent for, either in goods or in labour, has, by some strange delusion or other, come to be looked upon as of all human proceedings the most meritorious in itself, and the most grateful in the sight of Heaven. "Cast your bread upon the waters," says the text, "and you shall find it again after many days." Now, though this text be nothing more than a recommendation to industry and the skilful employment of men's talents, and the other

means of subsistence and profit, upon the plain common-sense inducement, that proper means properly used, must be successful,—this text, and many texts of similar import, have been, and (shame to the sense and honesty of the age !) *are* tortured into declarations by God Almighty, that he will repay, in the pardon of sin, all sums of money that are given—without value received! Leaving the blasphemy out of the question, it is so contrary to common sense and justice, that the belief of it involves a credulity as blind and morbid as that which believed that the staff of Joseph of Arimathea, which every body knows to have been a crabstick, became a thorn, and blossomed at Christmas, when planted at Glastonbury; or that the Devil, who is admitted on all hands to live most comfortably in fire, should have roared out with pain when the holy Dunstan caught him by the proboscis in the hot tongs. Not only is it as absurd as these or any thing else that any body at any time believed, but it is far more mischievous in its tendency. The legend of the staff could produce nothing farther than veneration for the thorn; which may, and very probably has had two very beneficial influences upon society:—it may be for that reason, that pilferers are not so apt to creep through hedges of thorns as through other hedges; and also that the breathings of love are said to be

more pure and sweet under a blooming thorn, than under any other canopy. Thus the legend of the thorn may diminish the vice, and increase the pleasure of mankind. As for Dunstan and the tongs again, it furnishes those who choose to believe it, and are a little sceptical as to their own powers of resistance, with a means of warding off a temptation of the Evil One, if he should happen to come upon them, *in propria persona*, for such a purpose. No doubt, the chances of their being put to the test are rather small, but in all doubtful cases, that is a very decided advantage.

But leaving legendary merit—merit of which nobody can see the use—altogether out of the question, and viewing almsgiving in the same light as all other human actions are viewed, upon what does its claim to superiority rest? It must be in the act itself, or in the effect that it has upon one or both of the parties. Now, it would take a good deal more logic than I have, or can borrow, to convince me that the mere act of giving money for what is called a charitable purpose, such as giving sixpence to a beggar, or five pounds a-year to an institution, differs from the paying of an equal sum for any purpose whatever. If a man shall give one shilling to a person who has worked hard for it, and another shilling to a person who has done nothing for it, the act is precisely the

same in both cases—it is the mere transfer of a shilling from one possessor to another; and if there can be two perfectly equal acts in the whole range of human doing, these are, giving A the same sum of money as B.

The merit, then, must be in the good which the shilling does to the parties, or to either of them. In principle, a shilling that is begged cannot purchase more than a shilling that is earned; and therefore, intrinsically, it is of no more value to the receiver; neither is it intrinsically of more value, or more profit, to him who gives it. To him it is a loss, while the shilling that he gives for labour done, or value received, is no loss at all, but a profit, as he would not part with the shilling, if that which he gets for it, did not afford him more gratification.

To argue, therefore, that there is any thing intrinsically meritorious in the mere fact of almsgiving, comes to very nearly the same thing as arguing that it is more meritorious to squander than to put to use; and that Heaven is better pleased when men do not deserve what they get, than when they do deserve it. In short, that injustice is the rule and measure of goodness; that merit is something not only different from justice, but directly and absolutely, contrary to it.

Still it is argued, that the man who pays his

tradesman, or his labourer, does nothing more than a common act, while he who gives alms, puts something to his credit, both here and hereafter; and the reason assigned for the superior value of the latter act, is that a man is bound in law—it is his covenanted duty—to pay the wages of his labourer; while the penny that he gives to the mendicant, is given of his own free grace and mercy; and therefore he has the whole merit of it. Now this is no more than saying, that a man has less merit for doing his duty than for doing what is not his duty,—a very wide and a very dangerous principle. This is the wedge by which moral obligation is rent asunder, and all sorts of laxities and crimes committed. The gay foster their own extravagance,—waste their substance in blowing up the bubbles of society, and leave their tradesman to be dragged to gaol and his family sent to the workhouse,—because they can command no more money than will pay their debts of honour—the obligations they have incurred at the gaming-table; ay, and the thief steals, and the ruffian murders, precisely upon the same principle—preferring what is not his duty to what is. In every thing that a man does or can do, there is either an obligation in justice, or there is not; and they who contend that the action for which there is no obligation in justice, is the most grateful to the

Supreme Being, must have a very singular theory of the nature and attributes of that Being.

Should there then be no paying of alms? Should the destitute be allowed to perish for want? Certainly not. Misery and suffering should always be relieved; and, which is far better, they should be prevented. But who are the miserable and the destitute? Are they those young and ablebodied persons who solicit alms in the streets, or by the way-sides,—those persons in the prime of life who come to the parish for their weekly allowance every Saturday, get drunk with it in the alehouse on the Sunday, and loiter out the week upon half work, because they know that next Saturday will bring them the same supply?—or are they those illegitimate children of the rich, for the covering of the sins of whose origin the *orphan* asylums of the Babylon have been founded, and for the support of which there flows so full a tide of preaching and dining? Are these the poor and the destitute, the chosen favourites of Heaven, which is particularly gratified by their being fed and clothed out of the labour of the industrious? (for that is the fountain out of which the support must originally flow, whatever may be the form, size, or nature of the pipes that convey it to the institution.) These are not the destitute,—and the bestowing of alms upon them is prostitution and injustice, instead of being merito-

rious in the sight of any one, save those who make a gain of the system—in cash or in character.

If any human being have those limbs and faculties, by the use of which he could support himself, and will not do it, the common sense of the case and the commandment concur in leaving him to starve, if so be his pleasure; because he is sure to put his hand to something before it comes to that. If any one has the ability and the will, and cannot find employment, the fault is in the construction of society; and it is aggravated instead of being corrected when such claimants get what they do not earn. The real poor, those of whose support the *onus* lies upon the whole of society, as a primary and moral duty, are they who are destitute of the powers and faculties necessary for earning their subsistence. Alms given to them *is* charity; but alms is never charity but when given to them. Charity to those who can and may work, is to compel them, either by the direct application of the laws of society, or letting them take the alternative—starvation or industry; and charity to those who can work and may not, is to remove the barrier out of their way—to alter that part of the construction of society which is the cause. Even to those who are not in present possession of powers and faculties by which they can support themselves, almsgiving is not always charity. If

it were so, a single generation would bring the whole world into the workhouse. Sensible people, however wealthy they may be, do not leave their children in that state of self-destitution in which they are during infancy. They teach them to do something for themselves, to administer to the supply of their own wants, and the gratification of their own desires, by the exercise of their own talents. The whole members of society are its children, and if they have the capacity of being educated, society always acts the part of a bad parent, when it does not so educate them, as that they can earn their own living and be independent. In common education, we have often to teach the *will* as well as the *can*—use the birch as a commentary on the book; and the parallel holds in the case of society educating its members—those who will not take to the book should have the birch given to them. Thus the fault, in all cases where the necessity of almsgiving is a fault, lies with society: where there is a *can* and a *will*, it is the fault of society if there be not a way; where there is a *will* without a *can*, society is bound to supply the latter, or show that it is impossible; and where there is a *can* without a *will*, the party should be either birched in society till the will comes—or birched out of it.

Even the most strenuous advocate for the in-

trinsic merit of almsgiving, will not deny that the cause of it—the destitution, be it natural or artificial—is an evil, and that the world would be much better were it removed altogether; and this at once concedes the whole matter at issue,—makes it imperative upon those who, from ability, station, office, or any thing else, have the arrangement of the affairs of society, to prevent all the artificial part—the part that arises from their own bunglings or bad intentions; and then the burden of the rest would, compared with that which at present presses upon the people of England, be light as a feather. Is this the case? Let the poor-rates, the institutions, and the ignorance and improvidence of the labouring classes, answer.

The poor-rates are generally admitted to have come in the stead of the alms given at religious houses, and are thus, in some sort, the mantle which the holy fathers have bequeathed to society; but there are now, in the nature and management of them, many mischiefs and abuses for which the holy fathers are not accountable—if indeed they be accountable at all, any farther than that their system took off a good deal of the odium and aversion which, when not perverted in some way or other, even the humblest and most ignorant of men feel when they are doomed to dependence, made to eat the bitter bread, which their consciences

tell them is not their own. This is, no doubt, bad enough—degrading enough to a people who affect to hold their heads higher and be more independent than any other people upon earth. Bad as this is, however, worse has followed; the very worst system in principle, has become the worst administered in practice; and the poor-rates, which were originally intended as a relief to the poor, have become a mill-stone round their necks to keep them in the lowest deep of degradation, while to the rest of society, excepting those who have the management of the rates, they are a curse.

Though John Bull boasts more of his independence than any body else, and though he wishes to be, and in his own belief is, the most independent of human beings; yet, in as far as custom and opinion go, John is the most abject of slaves. In the little matter that is before him, John is more at home than any body is. He is the perfection of abstraction; and, from the making of a pin to the construction of the most magnificent work of art, or the conducting of the most gigantic speculation, he is quite unrivalled; but his very abstraction, that power which fits him so well for succeeding and thriving as an individual, makes him a very bad political philosopher; and, in consequence of this, he squanders through his public institutions a great deal of what he earns by his

exquisite skill and unwearied application to the single pursuit that absorbs his whole mind. In consequence of this, too, John's institutions, if not the worst in principle, are the most expensive in practice, of any institutions in a free and enlightened country. Upon those subjects, John lacks not the growl of the thunder—the sound and the fury of complaint; but he has not the arrowy fire of the lightning which can penetrate and lay open; and if he would grumble a little less, and look about him a little more, it would be all the better for him. At present there are symptoms, and pretty strong symptoms, of his doing so. Formerly—and that not many years ago—John used to call upon his masters the Houses of Parliament to *do*, without ever hinting that they should first *learn*: he has, of late, begun to call for information, and thus he is in a fair way to improvement. There is, however, much to be known and done; and upon no one subject is there more, than upon this one of almsgiving, as it forms part of the economy of John's general household.

I have, of course, neither room nor capacity for going into the philosophy of John's poor-rates, and probably my readers, who will very naturally take up these light and fluttering volumes as mere playthings, will be very thankful that I have not; but still, it is impossible to give any thing like

even a sketch of the Babylon, without glancing a little at the practice.

The poor-rates, then, in and about the Babylon —and they cannot be presumed to be better in the remote parts of the country—are slavery and degradation to those in whose behalf they are pretended to be raised, and oppressive and unequal on the part of those who pay them. The law of settlement—the prohibiting of a man to enter a parish where he could find work, lest he should eventually become a pauper upon that parish—would, of itself, be bad enough. The man will, of course, wish to migrate only to a place where his condition is to be improved. He emigrates *away* from pauperism, and would, in all probability, escape it, if he were to be allowed the free range of England as the field for his research and the market for his labour. The law of settlement steps in and bars his honest search after independence. It says to him, as plainly as action can speak, "There is no work for you where you are; you dread the misery and degradation of being dependent upon others; you have a spirit above beggary, which prompts you to escape from its degradation to a place where you can be independent in the mean time, and probably save enough to support you in your declining years; but *I*, *the Law* —the wholesome and equitable law of England,

enacted by the wise and upright representatives of the people, for the mutual and equal benefit of all classes,—I, the Law, say that my strong arm shall break down that spirit; and just because you wish to go and escape from beggary, here you shall remain, and a beggar you shall be."

Philanthropists and priests, and all good and holy men, who are elevated above the common cares and labours of society, and thus have no need and no desire to study the ways of mere men upon the earth; or the laws that regulate their motions, look abroad from this happy island toward the ends of the earth, and call upon their fellow-countrymen to be liberal in their almsgivings for the emancipation of slavery there; and when the loyal and the fat,—and obesity and unreflecting loyalty are so intimately connected, that I am unable to say which is the cause and which the effect—(indeed I am very much disposed to set them both down as effects, and lay the cause somewhere in that curious arcanum which gives one man an unfair advantage over his fellows)—when the loyal and the fat meet to gauge the greatness and growth of the country in turcens of turtle and flagons of wine, —they, like the Pharisee in the gospel—no, not like him—expectorate, in all the breath that they then have room for, their thanks that they live in a country where every thing that once touches the

soil is as free as those northern lights that play around the pole without ever touching the soil at all.

Notwithstanding all this, the spring that feeds and fertilizes the whole wealth, and beauty, and glory of the land, is bound up in the cold ice of this law of settlement. Talents and industry, which, for the good, not of their individual possessors merely, though that should be the first care of a wise legislature, but of every class and person in the state, should be free as air,—not allowed merely, but encouraged and assisted, in getting to those localities where they can be most productively employed,—are chained down to the sod, and as fast planted on the earth, upon which they never house, as if they were so many vegetables; or, if they are permitted to go where they may be useful, it is under an express covenant, that, in case of casualty, the parish to which they belong shall fetch them back, though from the most distant corner of the country, at its own expense. In consequence of this, there is probably more annually wasted in England in transmitting paupers over the country, and in the legal and illegal acts of the suits and jobs that arise out of it, than would maintain the whole of the natural and legitimate poor, those whom original formation or accident deprives of the power of earning their own support.

Simple folly, even though it were upon the very verge of fatuity, could not have originated, and could not perpetuate, or even tolerate, such a system as this. There must be villany somewhere in the case; jobs and profits, got at the expense, not of the paupers, for that is a total loss, but of those who pay the rates. Common sense must tell any one that such must be the case; and if any one chooses to bestow even a very little common observation upon the proceedings of his parish, he will find that the hypothesis is completely established by the facts.

In every parish, whether there be what is called a select vestry or not, there is a set or junto of persons who manage the affairs just as they please. From the nature of the case they cannot be the very best men in the parish; and the event shows that they are often the very worst. If the parish be a populous one, such as some of those in the Babylon which contain as many people as the second-rate cities and towns in the provinces, it is not in the nature of things that the whole people, or even any considerable part of them, can attend to the affairs of the parish. When the independent and the uninterested do casually attend, it is by snatches, and they cannot spare, from their more personal avocations, time for getting a perfect knowledge of matters. Besides this, they who are

interested in the perpetration and perpetuation of abuses, have given "parish business" a bad name, made it a proverb for bungling and jobbing: thus the able and the honest are scared away from it; and, in their absence, it becomes the most corrupt of all possible mismanagements.

A great part of the evil unquestionably lies in the parish-officers not being paid for their labours, and made directly responsible to the general legislature of the country; both while they are in office, and retrospectively after they have left it. If there be a great deal to do, and especially if there be a great revenue to manage, a gratuitous management—a management for which there is no direct and open remuneration,—that management is always certain to be the very worst and most expensive that can be imagined. Men, and more especially men who aspire to the management of parish business—the wealthier landlords and tradesmen—grubbing and money-getting men—will not work for nothing. If they be not paid in salaries, they will be sure to pay themselves in jobs, take bribes, or derive other collusive advantages from those who act under them. One strong proof of this, if it were of a nature to stand in need of any proof, would be, that the ruling junto of each parish keeps a lawyer, always a cunning one, and very often one of very questionable character, or,

more strictly speaking, one whose character does not admit of any question at all. What is the use of such a man, in a matter which is meant to be so plain, that the very meanest capacity shall understand it? Is it that the parish business—the levying of a certain number of pounds, and the laying of them out fairly and honestly—involves quirk and quibble? No such thing. The attorney is there, and better paid for being there than the parishioners in general are aware of, for a very different purpose,—as a sort of ban-dog to frighten the people away from their own affairs; a *charitable* attorney, a cloak thrown over the doings of the wardens and overseers, and collectors, to

"Shade them from light, and cover them from law,"—

an office which can be effectually performed only by an attorney. Sometimes, indeed, this quill-man is ambitious beyond his fees; and while he holds the junto of the parish fast bound in the toils of their own jobbing, he jobs on his own account. Instances of this are now and then coming before the public, and as, like veins of gold or silver, they cannot be "worked up to the day" without a great deal of digging, the few that appear may be taken as very certain evidence of the many that really exist.

But, admitting that there were no direct jobbing and embezzlement in the sums actually raised—an

admission which nobody who is acquainted with the practice will be very willing to allow—still the men to whom the apportionment of the exactions is committed, have too deep an interest for doing the business fairly. If it be a good maxim in law, that no man is a proper judge in his own cause; it is an equally good rule of practice, that no man can act without bias in a case where his own interest is deeply involved. But these satraps of the parishes, these leading men of the Babylonian vestries, among whom the offices either circulate like the hand of a clock upon the dial, or by whose influence those who are known as supporters of their interest are brought into office, are, as has been said, the principal tradesmen and landlords; the former of whom must have a bias in favour of their customers, and the latter in favour of their property. I have heard of many cases in which the poor-rates of a parishioner have been raised fifty per cent. because he changed his baker or his shoemaker; and of very many instances in which a landlord, by being a leading man in the vestry, kept the rates of his houses as much below the rates of those who had no vestry influence. Men seldom do injustice unless for their own benefit; and therefore it is not for one moment to be supposed that the landlord does this with any view to the advantage of his tenants. He does it

in order that he may get higher rents. Thus the obvious tendency of placing the tradesmen and landlords in the chief management of the parish, is to have a certain portion of the profits of the former, and the rents of the latter, paid out of the parish rates; and by this means the most influential and wealthy men in the parish (they are, of course, influential only because they are wealthy) are placed foremost upon the poor-roll, and to an amount much greater than that of a score of the other paupers. It would be a matter of very laborious inquiry to ascertain what fraction of the rate, as levied within the Babylon, and the circum-Babylonian parishes, upon that part of the population who have no parish influence, goes, not to serve the necessities, but to swell the stores of paupers of this description; but from the inquiries that I have made, and the facts that I have elicited, I am inclined to think that one-fourth is much nearer the truth than one-eighth.

Funds which are levied upon the public in an unfair or iniquitous manner, are very likely to be expended in the same, — upon the well-known maxim of "lightly come, lightly gone," or that the thief is always a squanderer; and the practice certainly does not controvert the proverb. Parochial relief is not obtained as a matter of right or equity, but as a matter of favour. There are ways

and means of scowling away the really necessitous, and of giving what should belong to them to the favourites of the ruling party—sometimes to those who cannot be considered as poor in any thing but reputation.

It has often been complained of, that the worthies of the parish eat and drink no small portion of the funds; and there is a great deal of truth in the complaint. But if they would be honest in other matters, one would not grudge them a feed now and then. Even the Jews were not to "muzzle the *mouth* of the ox that trod out the corn;" and surely it is no very violent overstretch of christian charity to extend the franchise of the mouth to another quadruped.

It is not in this way only that the money is squandered. The leading men of the vestries, like the leading men of all other corrupt and corrupting bodies, must support those that support them. Even in the closest vestry, they must have a party to meet and defeat any accidental scintillation of liberal feeling that may steal in upon them; and as there is no glory in supporting persons and practices of the kind here mentioned, the only support that can be presumed to exist, is that which is produced by gain. Direct payments in money cannot well be given, because, though there be ways of mystifying the accounts, the requisite

amount could not safely be smuggled in, in this manner. But there are always little jobs of work needed about buildings, and other matters of which the parish officers have the conservation; and with edging in five pounds here, and two there, or even much smaller sums, according to the nature and necessities of the parties, the supporters can get their pittance without much chance of detection. In the individual instances these jobs are very trifling, but when their total is summed, it must come to something very enormous—hundreds of thousands annually for the whole country.

Another way in which the influential people levy a tax on the rest and put it in their own pockets, through the medium of the poor-laws, is by what is called "farming the poor," letting them out to hire as if they were mere utensils. This, as it is most extensively carried on in places where there is a great deal of field labour, and as the proprietors of the land, a class of persons among whom there is a most dogged and inveterate *esprit du corps*, without any very great perception or wish for knowledge even of their own best interests, — as they, if they do not traffic directly in the farming of the poor, yet derive a profit from it, in the increase of rent which it enables their tenants to pay,—is perhaps one of the most powerful supports of the system.

When the parish is wholly agricultural, the system of farming the poor is not so extensively followed; because the class would have to pay in rates on the one hand, what they gained by getting half the wages of their labourer paid by the parish on the other. When, however, the population is mixed, as in the parishes a few miles from the Babylon, where many of the citizens rent houses, but do not, on account of their more favourite and profitable occupations elsewhere, take any part in parish business, the system is very general and extensive.

When it is in full vigour, the object is, at those periods of the year when farm-work is most nearly suspended, to drive the whole labourers to the parish, and lay on a rate for their entire support. The burden of this falls heavy, and they who are not in the plot growl. The farmers, with their associates or confederates in the vestry, generally offer to come forward to the relief of the inhabitants, by hiring the labourers at such a fraction of the parochial relief as can be agreed on, and paying the amount into the fupds of the parish. But the sums so paid are subjected to the same jobbing process as sums raised by a direct rate; and thus the system is productive of an endless complication of loss to the honest and independent part of the public, and of degradation and misery

to the labourers, who, but for it, might be living in comparative comfort, upon the fair and honest reward of labour certainly not greater than that which, under the farming system, they are compelled to perform.

The labourer gets much less from the parish than he would earn if this vicious system did not exist, and for that little he barters away his independence and his character. To a man possessing health and strength, the shade of moral degradation between receiving parish relief and begging in the highway, or from door to door, is much too fine for my vision; and every body must allow that "*sturdy* beggar" (I need not translate the epithet) and thief are, if not perfectly identical and convertible terms, at least as germane to each other as can well be imagined. Nor is there any question that more of those larcenies, and even darker crimes, which crowd the calendars at the Babylonian sessions, and render dangerous, not merely the lanes at night, but the streets, the open thoroughfares, which are thronged with those useless limbs of the smaller kind of official jobbing called beadles and streetkeepers, are occasioned by that moral degradation of the labouring classes, which is the necessary result of such a system of poor-laws in general, and of this form of it in particular.

When this mode of farming is once established, it coils, and twists, and crushes, every generous sentiment, and every laudable ambition, as certainly and as irresistibly as a boa constrictor crushes the bones of its prey. The man is denuded of his birthright, made a slave in a free country, and, by having his pittance cut down to the very *minimum* of what can keep soul and body together, to him abilities and virtues are of no practical utility, and therefore no attempt is made to acquire them. Even the most powerful of the natural instincts, that which is found not only among savages in the rudest state of society, but among the most cruel and ferocious of the animal tribes, is by this baneful system blunted and destroyed. Among the peasantry of other countries, where they have not the curse of being cared for by the parish, the love of a home and a family is the grand stimulus to industry—the most powerful guardian of virtue; and however humble may be the means and occupation of the parent, he toils away cheerfully for the enjoyment of the happy faces, which the surplus of what he earns will produce around his little hearth, and his very selfishness, which, if it were confined to himself, would degenerate into a vice, beams forth in solicitude for these, and becomes a virtue.

Among a farmed poor, a people whom their employers can always keep cut down to the lowest farthing, and where the young men are beggars at the very bloom of life, there can be no such feeling; for who, with the certainty of starvation before him, could brook the idea of a family? Hence the passions burst out, and profligacy and recklessness, among the young of both sexes, are the inevitable consequences.

Taking the labouring classes according to the sordid theory, upon which alone a system of this kind can be supported, of buying their labour at the lowest price possible, it is singular that the conduct of the people here should be an anomaly from their conduct in every thing else. The very persons who farm the poor, and thus lay the surest foundation for a supply of the very worst labourers possible in all time coming, do not supply themselves with the worst and coarsest of all other articles on account of the smaller price. Their horses are of the best breed, and they are taken the greatest care of; the whole of their implements and furniture, and apparel, and trinkets, are all the most choice and costly that they can procure. Their interest and their vanity equally conspire towards this; and it is the labourer only that forms the exception, although he, as being the only *utensil*

that can reflect upon his condition, is the one upon whom an opposite mode of treatment would obviously have the most beneficial result.

Why men should act thus, why they should study their own interest the least, in that very matter where the study of it would be the most valuable both to themselves and to society, appears quite a paradox. If they have any "speculation in those eyes that they do glare with," they must see, and though blind they must feel, that of all useful things mankind are susceptible of the greatest improvement by proper treatment. Your *educated* horse may obey the bit and the spur a little better than his wild namesake on the Steppes of Siberia, or the Pampas of South America; but the wild one has the same range both of speculation and of action. With man the case is very different, whether he be educated for thinking, for acting, or for both. One would therefore suppose that no person, not even the most uninformed and unprincipled jobbers in the snuggest vestry in or about the Babylon, could be guilty of such an annihilation of useful talents, and their productions, as this system involves.

It is the fact, however, and people are obliged to deal with it in the same manner as they do with unsolveable things—to cut it through with *saws*. The chief one used in this case is, there being

no rivalship, and therefore no jealousy, between the owner and any animal or utensil but man. A robe may be of more intrinsic value than the wearer, and so may a horse be than his rider; but there is no rivalship between them, as the most costly dress cannot become in itself a fine lady, neither can a horse be petted or pampered into a squire. With men it is different; a labourer may be so educated, as to put to shame, in every thing estimable in man, the master for whom he labours.

This is the real basis upon which the whole fabric of social injustice—that injustice which does not immediately proceed from the workings of individual passion—rests; and though, in many of the detached instances that come before the public as direct oppressions, it be concealed by the working of individual passion, it still gives union and permanence to that system. Its being general, does not, however, make it wise; and those who have not been so habituated to it as to look upon it as part of the necessary framework of society, cannot help seeing that it is at once the most cruel and the most costly system. By taking away the grand stimulus to labour—rising in the world—it takes away much of the value of the labour itself; for, as that which the labourer receives is the very *minimum*, that which he gives for it is the *minimum* also.

The difficulty is, how to get rid of it. It forms part of the very constitution of society. The prejudices of the rich, the habits of the poor, the influence of the parish managers, with the whole train of patronages, peculations and jobs, are in opposition to its removal; and therefore, though "the wisdom of Parliament" may nibble at it in a small way, the only hope of an extensive reformation is in the diffusion of more rational information, more sound principles, among the people themselves.

Two things are especially necessary to be known; first, that the rich, as a class, have their interests, not opposed to, but identified with, those of the poor, in such a way as that when they go about by any means to deprive the poor of the liberty and reward of their labour, they themselves are the sufferers; and secondly, that the poor are never benefited as a class by any thing for which they do not give a full return in labour. That which the rich call their capital, be it in land, or any thing else, is useless and unproductive, unless it be worked; and the poor are they who work it. The capital is necessary, no doubt; but it is not half so necessary, at least not half so valuable, as the people. The capital is the raw material—the timber, as it were, out of which an utensil, a chair for instance, is to be made; and if the workman come

not to it, it will waste and rot where it lies, without the power of turning itself to any useful purpose. The workman, on the other hand, is active, and can make his election; and if he cannot find timber of which to make a chair for a seat, he can construct a bench of stones or turf, which can be used as a substitute. In a healthy state of society, people do not live upon capital, they live upon that which industry makes of it; and out of this there should be the living and something to spare. That there shall be this, depends on the skill and activity of the labourer; and these again depend very much upon his condition in society. As a mere animal, he may be driven; but as a man, he must be led—his pride, his ambition, a rational hope that he shall be able to better his condition in the world, is absolutely and indispensably necessary. Once make him believe or feel that he is entitled to no more than it is the pleasure of others to dole out for him—that, in short, what he does work for is not his own—and you cannot prevent him from confounding it with that which he does not work for; and thus, his energy and his honesty are gone together.

But if the poor be they who, and who alone, cause the capital of the rich to yield a revenue, then it follows as a necessary consequence, that the poor-rates, or any other gratuities which are syste-

matically given to any portion of the poor, not in a state of natural destitution, are in reality paid by the poor themselves. They bear the ultimate burden; and the loss, being a diminution of the revenue of society by the whole that the portion supported in idleness could earn, falls upon the whole of society. Thus, if there be in the parish workhouses in and about the Babylon, a thousand persons who are able to do work, and do not work, there falls upon that portion of society who labour, a loss equal to the whole maintenance of these, and also to the value of their work; which, as the country is increasing in wealth notwithstanding this baneful system, and at the same time supporting a great number of idle persons of various ranks, who are not in the workhouses, must be much greater than the expense of their maintenance, and would not probably be exaggerated if taken at twice or even three times as much. The stuffing of officers and vestries, the pilfering by overseers and managers, the jobs, the law expenses, and all the other items of abuse and waste, which the system carries along with it, certainly cause one pauper in the parish to consume more of that which the industrious earn, than five of those who are engaged in the earning of it.

Experience does not bear one out in saying that the many endowed charities, for the mere purpose of

maintenance, with which England in general, and the Babylon in particular abound, are much better than the system of poor-rates. So far as hospitals, whether for food or for physic, fairly meet and relieve those casualties from which it is impossible that society can be exempted, and against which a considerable number under any circumstances, and a very great number under the circumstances in which England is placed, cannot have the means of providing,—they are good, and fall within the category of that charity which cures instead of covering. If a man be lame, by all means let him have a crutch; but if you make him use one when he is not lame, you spoil the use of his legs, and give him the hobble and the helplessness of a cripple, without his being one in reality.

People who live under the same government and obey the same laws, are mutually responsible to each other for the property that they possess; and the man who, from the force of dotage, the fear of damnation, vanity, or any other cause that may prompt a man to do such a thing, wills his money for the erection of an hospital, or any thing else which supports in beggary those who could earn, commits very nearly the same crime as if he, in his lifetime, burned, or otherwise destroyed, national property to the same value.

The private almshouses, and the voluntary con-

tribution begging-shops of the Babylon, fall very naturally into this class; and notwithstanding the annual baiting of the spiritual trap of preaching, and the carnal trap of dining in behalf of many of them, they destroy the morals of society, and waste the funds which should be available for the purposes of real charity. In their essence, they are that alms before which a trumpet is sounded in the streets,—vanity is their cause, and vice their effect. The managers get habitual praise and patronage; and the contributors come in for their share of these also. Imagine two or three hundred fat citizens, stuffing themselves to the throat, under the serjeantage of a score with white sticks; then bumpering the wine to toasts and glees; next hearing their names bawled out amid the most unseemly beating of feet, because this one has given ten pounds, and the other five; and then, as they hiccup their way home, blessing themselves that they are charitable. I was once at one of these exhibitions: the man beside me was a steward; he gave a subscription and a speech; got thanks from the head of the chairman, and the feet of all the rest; went home; and the very next morning distrained the bed of a man who had been ten years his tenant, was but half-a-year in arrear with his rent, and had been nine months bed-rid, and unable to work,—

and this is charity! Ay, and one of the sins that it covers. Would that it were the only one!

If the principle be bad, it would be too much to expect that the practice should be very pure, because bad principles are not planted for their own sakes, but for the sake of the fruit. We find that the admissions to those establishments are canvassed for; decided by votes; that the votes are published in the newspapers; and that, in many instances, the successful candidates are able to advertise their thanks. The one who is relieved, therefore, is not the one who wants it most, but the very opposite,—the one who has the greatest influence—is able to command the greatest number of votes. Votes are, for admission to all sorts of places, from St. Stephen's to the Magdalen Asylum, obtained by canvassing; and as that which is worth soliciting cannot be expected without some equivalent,—as many, I may say an overwhelming majority, of those for the more important place are obtained by impure means, that is, means in which the qualifications of the candidates are not even an element, it would be very weak to believe that they become purer as we descend lower.

Admitting that the canvass proceeds upon the purest, the apparently least selfish motive, "Vote

for my nominee this time, and I shall vote for yours next," still it is not pure; for there is a barter of principle,—the one man gives, and the other binds himself to give, his vote, for favour, and not on account of the merits. But it were well if this were the only degree of corruption in the nomination to these institutions;—it is not, however; for in very many cases, those who take the chief interest in those institutions, do so from a charity which begins at home, and never travels far. In some instances they subscribe themselves into perpetual governorship, hold forth at the dinners, and canvass for contributions, in order that those whom they would be obliged openly, or under the rose, to support, may be permanently supported by the institution. In other instances they do it in order that their dependents may hold the offices to which salaries or the means of jobbing are attached. They do it also because it wins them the character of good and charitable men, which is no bad sign-board in any profession, whatever it may be; and in very many instances they do it because in no other way, within the compass of their capacity and connexion, can they purchase so much notoriety for so little money. In this way a man may for five pounds get what five thousand could not purchase for him in any other way,—thanks from a Royal Duke, delivered publicly before hundreds

of people, and then printed in a book. In what other market, let me ask, could even a wholesale dealer in soap or sailors' jackets, to say nothing of one who slices bacon or dribbles out gin to the poor at a charity of cent. per cent. to himself, win such glory as this—make, as it were, so near a hitch to seven years' immortality? Truly, I know of none; and therefore we need not wonder that many such should come to the market, and that the feeling of real charity, and the means by which that should work, should thereby be absorbed. I could, perhaps I should, write a great deal more, but the chapter is already a desperately long one: will the reader have the goodness to cast the mantle of his charity over that?

CHAPTER III.

THE REMNANT OF JACOB.

"And the children of Israel were fruitful, and encreased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty; and they filled the whole land."

No portion of the mingled multitude of the Babylon throws more confirmation upon the past, or gives more perplexity to the present, than the remnant of Jacob. Years, ages, and centuries have rolled by; race after race has been swept away by conquest, or obliterated by mixture; and, after the lapse of a generation or two, the soil has moulded the men who have lived upon it to a wonderful uniformity of character, and even of appearance. The different nations by whom, at long intervals of time, Israel has been led into captivity, or scattered, as it were, friendless and fugitive among those by whom his very name was hated, are gone from existence, and their memorials have

nearly followed them. Memphis is no more; of Nineveh there is not a stone; Babylon of old has "become heaps;" Shushan is an indeterminate problem, even to the all-believing antiquary; Rome, invaded by a pestilence which truly "walketh in darkness," sits widowed by the crumbling monuments of her mighty lords, while

> "Desolation o'er the grass-grown street,
> Extends his raven wing;"

and even Salem is a wilderness, red, barren, sowed with salt, and mouldering away in a pestiferous atmosphere! Two thousand times has the earth encircled its orbit, and varied the year by its seasons, since the Jews fell under the Roman power; and the period is not much less, since, after the most determined resistance that ever was made, their holy city was taken, sacked, and rased, and they were scattered over the face of the earth without a country, or even a county or a hamlet that they could call their own.

Since that time, the armies of the South, and the hordes of the North, have swept the face of the earth in succession; and each has obliterated the character, the manners, and the language of that which was before it, as the tide obliterates the monument which a heedless boy makes for himself on the sand. The book of knowledge has been

alternately shut and open; the torch of science has been by turns hid in a cave, and blazing forth to the enjoying and applauding nations; superstition and sense have alternately guided the opinions of men; and destroying and decoration have been by turns the efforts, if not the motives, of their actions. With these changes the people have changed; and how many or how contradictory soever may have been the elements of which any nation is composed, their peculiarities are blended in harmony (or in discord, if you will) and lost in the aggregate. None but a hunter in quest of fictions on which to found a theory, thinks of pointing to one inhabitant of England or of the Babylon, and saying, he is a Briton, a Roman, a Saxon, or a Dane. If the man be a recent importation, we may indeed tell the country from which he is imported. You can ken the hard features, and "horny hide" of the Scot—the animal ardour of the Cambrian—or the Irishman, like a pot of bronze, hardened while boiling, but not cooled;—you can distinguish these, and distinguish them all from the "eat-and-drink, and-pay-for-it, and-be-satisfied" face of the genuine Babylonians. But it is not from genealogy that you know this. The Scot may be the descendant of a Dutch fisherman, or a French barber; the Cambrian may be in a direct line from Cæsar or Agricola, without one drop of

goat's blood in him, save what he may have eaten in black-puddings; and the Hibernian may be from some old Norman adventurer. These distinctions tell you from whence the individual comes, but not from whom; and in appearance and manner, and almost in language, a Newcastle collier differs almost as much from a Kent ploughman as from a kerne of Connemara, and yet the two are allowed not only to be both Saxons, but, I believe, both of the same cargo. If you fetch a man from Newcastle to Kent, the *rrr* is taken out of his offspring, and sent back to its parish; and let a child but be born in the Babylon, and left to pronounce as it pleases, and the very first time that it attempts the word, it will say "*w*ery."

Upon all and every race, that of Jacob excepted, there soon passes an equalizing hand, as irresistible as it is invisible; and, though philosophy has never yet dug so deep as to reach it, there is a moral power that moulds man to the soil, and tempers him to the elements, just as there is a physical one which, in the absence of art, and very generally in spite of it, moulds and tempers the vegetable tribes.

But, amid all this annihilation and reproduction, this change and this assimilation, the People who have not been a nation, have had no country, and no government—who have been separated to

the ends of the earth—aliens, generally reviled, and often subjected to the most cruel treatment—have in their features, their minds, and, as far as history enables us to judge, in their manners, known no change. The current of time has careered on and on, rolling rocks, and islands, and continents before it to oblivion; but the feather which did not appear, and does not appear, to be based upon any thing solid, rides precisely where it was at the beginning, or rather where it was before any of those changes, with which informed memory is acquainted, were begun.

Any other man is soon lost in a crowd such as that of the Babylon; but you never can mistake a Jew. Through a telescope, even though you jerk round the diminishing end, you can always make sure of him. It is not his garb, his occupation, the station that he holds in the world, his complexion, or any thing extrinsic, that guides you to the knowledge of him; for these are as mutable in him as in any other man, and had his character depended upon them, or upon their aggregate, his identity would, long ere now, have been lost. Be he in rags, or in the most gaudy apparel; be he in the costume of the East, or of the West; be he the banker of kings, or the bearer of an old clothes bag in the streets; be he dark as an Ethiop, or fair as a Russian; or be he tall as a Patagonian,

or diminutive as an Esquimaux, it is all the same; if you know any thing about Jews, you can, with no inquiry, and very little observation, instantly make him out. By any one of the five senses, (I know not, by the way, that ever *tasting* was put to the proof,) you may distinguish him, without the aid of any of the others. By seeing, by hearing, by smelling, and, in an especial manner, by feeling; and, could one retain any perception without external senses, there is no doubt that the "inward ear" of consciousness, or conscience, that singular, invisible, and, as the philosophers say, immaterial organ, which always gets less by the same means, to the same extent, and at the same time, that it gets greater, would be perfectly cognizant of him.

And it is just because his identity is in his essence, and not in his attributes, that a Jew can be thus known. If Jews were a nation, they would be changed by the same causes that change other nations; they would be moulded by custom, religion, law, and government. If they were a rank or class of society, taking their characters from external things and distinctions, which have nothing to do with their minds or merits, you could never be sure of them but when they showed you their credentials. Let any one, who is ignorant of the names and appearances of the indivi-

duals, go to an assemblage of peers, all in the same garb, and enjoying that stately quiescence which used to be accounted the celestial bliss of peers, and attempt to bring out the Duke of Wellington, and I would stake my pen against the Duke's sword, that he would bring out the wrong man. So much for the individual whose distinctions are extrinsic. Then, for the class; let any one go to hell—I mean of course to a gaming-house,—and attempt to fetch thence a lord, and the chances are that his choice would be a sharper. Send any one any where for a Jew, and there is no danger of his pitching upon a Christian. Let any one go to an assemblage of Jews, and he would have no difficulty in picking out a Rothschild.

But though there be no possibility of mistaking the type and character of Jacob, yet it cannot be described but by circumlocution and innuendo; because, being of the general essence of the race, and not of the accidents of the individual, its demonstration is not so much in qualities as in the manner of those qualities. You know a Jew by his walk; and yet it is not from the velocity, or the measure of step. It is a shambling walk; and yet it is not the shambling generally, but the manner of shambling, which fixes the identity. The features point it out to you; and yet it is not ab-

solutely the form or colour of the features. For instance, many Jews have a most abundant proboscis, with a most singular convexity of the *septem* between the nostrils; but many more of the same size and contour, and having the same peculiarities in the under part, do not belong to the Jew. If, however, you find one which does belong to a Jew and another which does not, of each of which singly you would be obliged to give the very same description; the moment they were brought together you would find them very unlike. A Jew's mouth, too, is very often a peculiar mouth as to form,—as if you multiplied the mouth of a satyr by the bill of an unfledged sparrow, and took the square root of the product; or it is very different from this—with the lips retroflected all round, colourless, and apparently without life. In any other persons, two mouths of these kinds would impress you with very different ideas of the owners; but in two Jews the expression, the characteristic and classifying expression, is the same, and without any thing similar in Christian mouths, even though you could not describe them as different from these. It is the same with all the other features: there is a general manner in the statuary of them, and also in the painting; it is not universal, however—there being many who are not Jews, whom you would be obliged to chisel, burine, or describe in the same

way; and there is an intellectual something which you have no words for, but which in a moment enables you to decide.

In the common acceptation of the words, you cannot connect it with beauty or ugliness, neither can you say that it indicates any particular passion or temperament, as that the owner is good-natured or bad-natured; the short, simple, and unerring truth that it tells is, that the owner is a Jew. It informs you as plainly, and indeed more plainly than if he were to speak it in words, (for an essential look cannot prevaricate,) "I am not one of you; I belong to a people peculiar and apart."

Jews are of all varieties of form and face—from models of beauty to the ugliness of sin; and their physiognomy speaks all sorts of individual character—from a high degree of rectitude, urbanity, and talent, down to the very dregs of vice and meanness; so that, judging of them by the rules of Lavater, or any other more unerring rule of face-reading which a man may form to himself, one arrives at very nearly the same conclusions as with other men. But the generic trait—that which belongs to them all, handsome or homely, good or bad, and which has been accounted a vice or a virtue, though more usually a vice, according to the fancy of the party—ought not to be tried by any test, whereby the difference between one individual and

another is sought to be arrived at, and has not, so far as I know, (which is not far,) been received into any of the systems of physiology.

This trait belongs to the Jew as one of his race; and the individual has no more merit in the good, or demerit in the evil, of which it may be productive, than a man has in speaking the language or wearing the costume of the country in which he happens to be born. Like these, it must be produced by the circumstances in which he, to whom it belongs, is placed; and people are no farther answerable for the effects of circumstances, than as they have a control of—the absolute making and ordering of the circumstances themselves. One cannot blame a slave for the indolence and meanness of his character; neither is it any merit in him who meets with nothing to ruffle him, to keep his temper.

Still, there can be no doubt that this trait of expression is the key to all the differences that there are between the character of the Jew and that of the people among whom he happens to sojourn; and there can be as little doubt that sufficient cause for it is to be found in the circumstances under which the Jew is placed. Yes, the single trait in the aspect of every Jew, rich or poor, honest or the reverse, is the key to the whole of his character; and if it were but well and skilfully

used by one who possessed ability, and (which is far less common or easy to be found) freedom from bias and theory, equal to the task, it would unlock a rich cabinet of useful information, both for those to whom it does, and those to whom it does not belong.

Its own language throws a little light upon it; and as it is the only light that we have, I may be pardoned for making a little, and a very little use of it. What it says is, "I am not one of you;" and it says this in every country, Christian, Mohammedan, or Pagan. It says this, too, because it is the truth,—that which is impressed upon the character by circumstances not being capable of falsehood.

The Jew is what he is, and remains what he is, just because he is out of the circle and framework of the nations. It is the same with the Gipsy, though his habits and modes of life are different. Having no country, he has no patriotism—no interest in the weal or the woe of the people among whom his lot happens to be cast. In every thing public, the people of any country, of England for example, have, besides their private and personal interests as individuals, a public interest as members of the whole; and this public interest is often so strong, and the glory arising from the sacrifice so great, that they willingly sacrifice their dearest

personal interests, and even their lives on account of it. The people, whose government it is, partake in all the honour or disgrace of that; they claim a share in every public work; and to all that is not appropriated to an individual they apply the term "our,"—*our* king, *our* parliament, *our* army, *our* navy, *our* fields, *our* mountains, *our* rivers, *our own* little island. These are all common expressions, words of endearment, and by the use of them the mind is drawn out, and a man's very selfishness is parted among his countrymen,—becomes patriotism, and leads to all those little reciprocities which render society sweet, and enable mankind to do in concert what they never could accomplish singly.

Of all this the Jew can feel nothing. The country is not his country; the laws are not his laws; the government is not his government; the public works and the public institutions are not his; and therefore, of all that is done, said, or proposed in the country, the only consideration that the Jew can have, is how he may turn it to his individual advantage. The very situation in which he is placed takes the soul of public spirit, feeling, and virtue out of him; and yet people wonder that he should be an usurer, an extortioner, a cheat, a receiver of stolen goods, or a thief. There is, however, no need for any mystery, or even marvel

in the case; for place any number of Christians in the same relation to the rest of society and their conduct would be just the same. The Catholics of Ireland are not so much insulated as the Jews, and yet their partial insulation has a considerable effect upon them; they do not feel the same interest in the state, or in any of the institutions belonging to, or under the control of the state, as those who are without any blot in the scutcheon of their franchise.

In proportion as the Jew of any one country is, by custom or by law, detached from that, he naturally attaches himself to the Jews of other countries; and thus, the very circumstances which make the Jews a separate and peculiar people, in every country where they are found, bind the scattered fragments together, and make the whole one people, and the objects of their pursuit one, wherever they may be found.

Their want of interest in the prosperity of the countries where they live, leaves their whole faculties free to turn the casualties and the follies of other people to account; the similiarity of their circumstances in most countries gives them a freedom and universality of communication and intercourse which no other people can obtain; and the prohibition that is in most places upon them, of not acquiring lands and attaching themselves to

the soil, naturally turns their attention to the acquisition of that sort of property which is allocated to no particular country, but may be transmitted with the same ease as themselves, and be everywhere of the same value.

Those circumstances necessarily dispose and eminently qualify them for being dealers in money. Those who have any attachment to any particular country, other than the profit they make in it for the time, are apt to spend upon the soil of that country, or upon things not easily transportable out of it, all their savings as fast as they accrue; they seek to promote that which is of real use to the country in which they are; they encourage the arts and the sciences, with a view not only to their own good but to that of coming generations; and when the public good runs counter to their private interests, though they are dishonest and job sometimes, yet they have a conscience—some conscience in not plundering the state, as they are well aware that the loss must fall upon their relations and children. But, from the very circumstances in which he is placed, a Jew can have no conscience of the kind,—he is not of the society; and therefore he cannot, in his own estimation of the matter, commit any crime against it. There is but a thin shade of difference in the feeling of turpitude in crimes committed against the whole of society,

and in crimes committed against the individuals of whom that society is made up; and hence the same absolvement from the connection of society loosens from the obligation of individual justice. The very same cause that makes a Jew a habitual smuggler, or one who, in all custom and excisable matters, endeavours to evade the impost, constitutes him also a quack and impostor in every thing which he fabricates or vends, a cheat in his bargains, an usurer where he lends, and a receiver of stolen goods when it answers his purpose.

Upon the people of the country, properly so called, there is a moral obligation, which restrains them in all cases when they are not either utterly depraved, or under the influence of passion. Of this restraint a Jew is free, and thus there is nothing by which he can be held, but the fear of detection and of the gallows. All this, too, without any excess of depravity upon his part; and therefore it would be much more easy to prove superior virtue in the remnant of Jacob from their forbearance, than greater depravity from the crimes they commit. There is no doubt, however, that the want of reverence for the laws of society, and the consequent want of restraint which the situation of the Jews imposes upon them, has, by example, a very pernicious influence upon the rest of society;

and thus, though they are not the moral causes even of their own evasions and breaches of the law, they are the *de facto* causes of these and a good many besides.

Another thing: while the Jews continue in the same relation to the rest of society as they are at present, and in the same numbers, any system of police that may be introduced into the Babylon, must fail in producing the same effect as if the ties of patriotism and country were binding upon all the inhabitants. A more rational system—a system which would teach the people respect for the law itself, instead of mere evasion of the punishment, cannot be made to bear upon the feelings of the remnant of Jacob; and so numerous as they are, and so prone to prompt others, for the sake of profit to themselves, to the perpetration of crimes which they are too cunning directly to commit, they must, under any system or any circumstances which do not place them in the same relation to society as other people, be a continual fountain of vice.

In passing along Holywell-street, some of the courts in the purlieus of old Drury-lane, Monmouth-street, Rosemary-lane, or any other Babylonian locality of which the remnant are the chief tenants, one cannot help being struck with the frippery and frowsiness, and pitying a set of wretches,

who are condemned to live in such filthy places, and deal in little else than rags. The thick air of such places seems, however, to agree with them, just as mephitic effluvia are said to agree with the badger; for they are all fat. That they do make some money by the sale of the frippery is true; and they make a good deal also by letting out tawdry dresses to the unfortunate females who parade and pollute the streets of the Babylon; but the frippery which hangs outside is the sign-board, and not the shop. The chief gains are made by the purchase of articles that have been lightly come by, and which are very seldom offered to sale at the shop where they are purchased, or till the manufacturing part of the remnant, who are carefully instructed in all the arts of manipulation, have what is technically called "translated" them —changed them into articles of another kind, or another appearance, according to circumstances. As the variety of articles that may be lightly come by in the Babylon is endless, and as the greater part of them are, of course, articles that have been used, the frippery shop is the very best place for receiving them; because the entrance there excites no suspicion. A number of such dens together is also favourable to the system, because, in the event of a search, the thing searched for may travel round the whole, and be back at the original

receiver, before the officer shall have examined half the dens. Articles of apparel, when they get mingled in the mass of an old clothes-shop, are not easily detected; and this is one reason why almost all the caterers for old clothes, who croak about the streets, and, where they can procure audiences with servants, tempt them to commit small robberies upon their masters, are Jews. The operations of the remnant of Jacob thus add very little to the real value of wealth, even where they herd in swarms. They are mostly employed in disguising, transmutation, and counterfeiting; and they are enabled to put a good deal of workmanship upon an article of no value, and yet sell it cheap, from the way that they get possession of the materials.

There is hardly a legitimate article of noted value or excellence, of which the Jews have not a counterfeit, made so externally similar to the original, that it takes a person well skilled in the article in question to find out the cheat. Manton guns, Earnshaw's chronometers, pictures by the first masters, and all sorts of things to which any name can give an ideal value, are in constant manufacture by scores of fellows in cellars and garrets, of the very worst materials, and, in all but the external gloss, of the most careless workmanship; and many a curse is, when the article is

found to be useless, muttered against the honest and skilful artificer, from the Jew's working upon the cupidity of the purchaser, and selling him the "*shenuine*" article "*sheap.*"

The enumeration of all the means to which those minor Jews resort for the purpose of "spoiling the Egyptians," would be very long and not very interesting. In proportion as they are more numerous and habitual than those resorted to by any other class of society, they are all referable to the peculiar circumstances under which the Jew is placed. Whether any means could be devised for bringing the remnant out of that state, and whether they would come out of it when called, are problems that I shall not attempt to solve. It is certain that when Jews are what is called "converted," they in time, though it takes a considerable time, lose the peculiarities of their class, and become Anglicized; but whether the constant ebb and flow of the current to and from the Continent might not prevent the Anglicization of the whole is another matter.

The character of Shylock, as delineated by Shakspeare, is a bold and striking one, and may be a very faithful portrait of an Israelite when he is subjected to the personal contumely and insult which Shylock is described as receiving at the hands of the haughty Venetians. But the charac-

ter of Shylock is not that of a Babylonian Jew. He has all the cupidity of Shylock certainly, and prefers his ducats to his daughter; but as he meets with no systematic insult or wrong, there is nothing to excite in him that deadly and implacable revenge that forms the leading trait in Shylock's character. Instead of preferring a pound of Christian flesh to thrice his bond, the Babylonian Jew would prefer the price of the bond; and, if he could not get the whole, the half or any fraction of it, before all the Christian flesh, and all the Jewish flesh too, in the world. It would be unjust to hold up the Jew as a model of kindness; but certainly cruelty and revenge, for their own sakes, are no parts of his character. He cares not who is robbed or whom he ruins, provided he makes his profit; but of the more cruel offences we do not find more committed by Jews than by other people.

Without patriotism and all the stimuli to the nobler passions that grow out of love of country, the Jew cannot be what one would call an elevated or an amiable character. The proper *laws* of the place are denied to him; and thus he is thrown upon his money, or that which he can always convert into money, as his sole idol. In all idolatry, the worship of one idol, whatever that idol may be, has the most pernicious effect; that passion itself eats up all the other passions, and

without any assumption of a worse original disposition, the man becomes worse in reality. Of all single idolatries, the worship of gold is more debasing than the worship of any thing else, because it is close to the regions of dishonesty and fraud.

The pilfering, and purchasing, and counterfeiting, are, however, only the under-play of the remnant of Jacob; dealing in money is their grand work, that to which the wealthier devote their chief attention, and to which the ambitious among minor Jews look up, as commoners do to a coronet, or parsons to a mitre.

The principle which gives their traffic here its peculiarities is, however, the same as that which they act upon in the very lowest spheres of their employment. They have no reciprocity of interest or feeling with the parties with whom they deal, and therefore they hunt for the inexperienced, the inconsiderate, and the unfortunate; and by taking bonds and securities at the legal rate of interest, for sums far larger than they really advance, they manage to amass great wealth, and generally also to ruin those who have the misfortune to fall into their hands.

In former times their transactions were in a great measure confined to private individuals; and the plunder of an improvident lord or two was considered no bad crop for the year. Now, how-

ever, courts and nations are their game — the sceptre has *de facto* returned to Judah; and the nominal lawgiver is not only between, but absolutely under his feet. In former times, though there were more frequent squabbles among courts and kings, they were of smaller magnitude than they have been of late; and as the vassals gave servitude, the expenses were borne at the time. Latterly, however, the expensive and protracted hostilities have plunged almost every government into debt; and so busy have the servants been in plundering, while their masters were squabbling, that the revenues are, in many instances, not equal to the peace establishment; and no king—continental king, of course—can as much as buy even a cudgel, unless he can borrow the money. The property of the people, strictly so called, in each country, being vested in fixed and tangible things, such as lands, houses, and manufactories, has been taxed to so large an amount of its annual revenue to meet even the current expenses, that they have no spare money to lend. By their creepers and suckers, which are ramified all over the world, but which have all a communication with the trunk, the remnant of Jacob contrive to draw up a considerable portion of property, which is transportable and convertible; and thus they minister now, on a great scale, to the necessities of states,

in the same way, for the same object, and on the same terms, that they used to minister to the necessity, or rather the prodigality, of individuals. Perhaps I should have said, "the prodigality" of states too, that being the only way in which states can become necessitous; but as there is a certain courtesy to be used when we speak of those who have the management of nations, inasmuch as he who is on the top of the cone, is in as much danger of falling every way, as he who is on the side is of falling one way, and as the words, in such cases, have very nearly the same meaning, the more polite appellation is the more preferable.

The feudal system being at an end, and the advisers of kings being no longer able to drive the people to battle like sheep to the slaughter; taxation being in most instances pushed to that limit, at which it cuts up, not the produce merely, but a part of the producing power, and thus has a tendency to diminish instead of increase; the proceeds of this taxation being consumed, and a mass of already contracted debt pressing upon every court, and pinching it in the very necessaries of existence; the nations—that is, the persons who conduct the affairs of the nations, for the people themselves were never doing better than they are at this moment, in spite of all the pressure—have come to that pass, involved themselves to that extent, at

which they can neither help themselves nor each other. Their only resource, therefore, has been the Jews; and though this must have been a bitter draught to people so wise, so feeling, and so delicate in all their senses of honour, as those who, in the most enlightened times that the world ever saw, counsel the greatest kings, and direct the greatest nations that ever were heard of; yet this bitter draught they have all been, more or less, compelled to gulp down, and some of them to drain to the very dregs.

How the case stands between the Jews and other nations, falls not within my province to inquire; but in this country they have a complete control over a revenue of nearly forty millions sterling, and they play at shuttlecock with a capital of about eight hundred millions!

In furthering the prosperity of nations, the Baconian definition holds, and "Knowledge is power;" but in fighting battles, and in the business of governing generally, "Cash is power;" and therefore, as the remnant of Jacob have the control of the cash—of more cash than all the rulers of the world could bring to bear on any one subject at any one time—they have the control of the power; and as a controlled power is not a power at all, but a means, or instrument, or tool, in the hands of that which controls it, the remnant of

Jacob are, at this moment, the power which *de facto* governs the nations, whatever be the powers that claim to govern them *de jure*, or nominally.

I do not mean to say that the Jews are in possession of this immense and almost incomprehensible volume of cash, of which eight hundred millions forms but a fraction. Such a sum never was in existence; and this capital is nothing more than a record of the sums which the several nations among whom it is parcelled out have spent, or squandered, or whatever any one chooses to call it, more than the maximum of income that they could levy by taxation. Of this, the Jews, who nevertheless have the control of it, and turn it into an engine of immense profit to themselves, and corresponding loss to every body else, never, out of their own honestly or fairly-gotten wealth, contributed a single shilling. Those of them who are in the Babylon are mostly recent importations, who came into the country in a state of beggary, or bordering upon beggary, and who, all the time they have been in it, have never added to its real wealth—to the stock of useful commodities in it—so much as the value of a single hob-nail. They have been paupers upon its bounty for their subsistence, and plunderers of its wealth for all that they may have amassed. It is true that their plunderings have been without the statute; but

that does not lessen the loss, while it embitters the thought of it: plunder which the law protects, is always more galling than that which it punishes.

Of the capital which has been withdrawn from the industry of the people of this country, and spent by the Government, it is rather under than over the truth to say that the Jews have had ten per cent., or about eighty millions, for being the broker between the Government and those who really advanced the money; and, what with jobbing in one way or another, they must get hold of the same fraction of the interest,—that is, of the forty millions which the people of this country annually pay as interest of the public debt, four millions annually go to the pockets of the remnant of Jacob. If to this there be added the sums made, and those cleared by foreign loans, the greater part of which was also withdrawn from the productive capital of this country, the Jews have, at one time or another, got hold of as much of the money of the people of this country, principal and interest, as would, had it been properly husbanded, yield a revenue, which, excepting the interest of the debt, would pay the whole public expenditure of the Empire. They have got this, too, without any trouble of levying, without any bad debts,—save between the one and the other, and these do not diminish the receipts of the whole,—in

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promptly paid money, ready to be hung as an additional millstone round the necks of those upon whom it is levied; and thus their power, even in England, is neither a fable nor an exaggeration, but a real and substantial sway. And if it be this in England, with all its boasted freedom and means of inquiry, what must it be in those states where the government is comparatively despotic? If here it wield as much of the real governing element—*cash*, as all the three states of the Government, there it must have super-kingly sway. Even while I write, the conclusion to which I have come by mere theory and hypothesis, has been stated in the House of Commons, and has had the most tremendous effect both there and upon "the seat of the Beast," in the city. The hounds of Saint Stephen have shown themselves a little dull upon the slot, and a little stiff in the stretch; but now that they have fairly nosed the game, it is to be hoped they will follow it to the death.

The existence of this power being established, both by fair induction from the theory, and admission of the fact, the question may very fairly be put, "How does it operate, and for what purpose?" I wish the answer were as pleasant, as it is palpable and plain: it operates for unalloyed and unannealed evil—for the personal gain of the remnant of Jacob, at any sacrifice on the part of those

in whose lands they sojourn, and who have incautiously, and, we fear, not in all cases with motives the most pure, or hands the most clean, allowed the remnant to occupy this formidable position—a position from which it may be no easy matter to dislodge them.

They who command money so certainly, and to so enormous an amount, and are absolved from all the ties of country and patriotism and society, can have no motive but that of making this money the means of accumulating more; and, having no means of accumulation but the inconsideration of counsellors and the misery of nations, their whole power and wiles must be directed to the continuation and extension of corruption and abuse. Every species of reform, all economy, all reduction of expenditure, all extension of the liberty of the people, every thing that tends in any way to increase the revenue and lessen the cost is a declaration of war upon the remnant of Jacob. Their song is, "Borrow and waste, and waste and borrow again," that they may have their bargain and their *bonus*, and more deeply embarrass and entrammel the people and their rulers. For the carrying of this into execution, they have their spies in the councils of nations, and their hirelings in the chambers of kings. Their couriers traverse every land; all accidents are taken advantage of

by them; and if they find nothing amiss in any country, they have cunning and influence enough to make it. What is the salary that any nation could give to a minister, compared to what the Jew could afford to give him, if by any trick, manœuvre, or wasteful expenditure, he could force that nation to borrow ten or even five millions? Absolutely nothing. Therefore, we have only to find, what I fear is but too easily found, a certain number—even the number *one* will do—of confidential servants of the public, who have their price; and through them the nation is mortgaged to the remnant of Jacob. There is no reservation, no pity, no redemption; it is

"Inexorable all, and all extreme."

Is this brought about by any pre-eminence of service, any blandishment of eloquence, any thing which, were it not for its mischievous effects, one could admire? No such thing!—the whole is produced by a sort of mechanical cunning, demanding no information beyond the common rules of arithmetic, and nothing that is either elevated or fascinating in human nature. Any body that were in the track, and would descend to do it, could do it.

Sceptic, go to the Royal Exchange almost any morning that you please, and among some score

of persons, whose appearance will not very greatly elevate your notions of the dignity and grace of human nature, you will see some one, whose face and figure alike baffle your powers of description; and his whole man and manner make you instinctively repeat the vulgar tetrastich.

> "I do not like thee, Doctor Fell,
> The reason why, I cannot tell:
> The fact itself I feel full well—
> I do not like thee, Doctor Fell."

The thing before you stands cold, motionless, and apparently speculationless as the pillar of salt into which the avaricious spouse of the Patriarch was turned; and while you start with wonder at what it can be or mean, you pursue the association, and think upon the fire and brimstone that were rained down. It is a human being of no very Apollo-like form or face. Short, squat, with its shoulders drawn up to its ears, and its hands delved into its breeches-pockets. The hue of its face is a mixture of brickdust and saffron, and the texture seems that of the skin of a dead frog. There is a rigidity and tension in the features, too, which would make you fancy, if you did not see that that were not the fact, that some one from behind was pinching it with a pair of hot tongs, and that it were either ashamed or afraid to tell. Eyes are usually de-

nominated the windows of the soul; but here you would conclude that the windows are false ones, or that there is no soul to look out at them. There comes not one pencil of light from the interior, neither is there one scintillation of that which comes from without reflected in any direction. The whole puts you in mind of "a skin to let," and you wonder why it stands upright, without at least something within. By and by another figure comes up to it. It then steps two paces aside, and the most inquisitive glance that ever you saw, and a glance more inquisitive than you would have thought of, is drawn slowly out of the erewhile fixed and leaden eye, as if one were drawing a sword from a scabbard. The visiting figure, which has the appearance of coming by accident and not by design, stops but a second or two; in the course of which looks are exchanged, which, though you cannot translate, you feel must be of most important meaning. After these, the eyes are sheathed up again, and the figure resumes its stony posture. During the morning, numbers of visitors come, all of whom meet with a similar reception, and vanish in a similar manner; and last of all the figure itself vanishes, leaving you utterly at a loss as to what can be its nature and functions.

That singular figure is Nathan Myers Rothschild, the Jew, who holds the purse to all the kings

on the Continent, and opens or closes it just as he lists; and who, upon certain occasions, has been supposed to have more influence in this country than the proudest and most wealthy of its nobles—perhaps more influence than the two Houses of Parliament taken together. He takes that post, to be in the midst of his scouts; those visitors who appear to come casually, are all there by appointment. They communicate their information, receive their instructions, and hasten to act; and probably at each application of them to the grand calculating machine, it was willed that a million of money should change masters, or that a potentate who calls himself absolute, should alter his purpose, dismiss his minister, or change the system of his politics. Ungainly as his external man is, and detached as it seems from business, and incapable of thought, 't is the case of perhaps the most curious, and certainly the most powerful calculating machine that ever existed.

The prodigies of calculation, which have from time to time been exhibited, all sink into nothing before this one. They could play with numbers, in a manner wonderful enough, no doubt; but their play was unproductive, was nothing but a meteor marvel to be soon forgot; but this wields the purse of the world, and by means of that, all the powers in it. Along, too, with the intuitive

magic of numbers which this singular being possesses, there must be a magic over the passions of men; but what it is, or how it works, the possessor will not tell, and nobody else can.

Even this secrecy, however, forcible and fell as it is, cannot last for ever. The former high priests of Mammon have suffered reverses, have been swept of all their wealth, driven to despair, and perished by their own hands; and therefore the man who lives upon the produce of his daily industry, must be more happy, and may be more secure than Rothschild the Jew, amid all his wealth and power. So much for the very acmè of the remnant of Jacob.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BUILDINGS OF BABYLON.

"And they said one to another, Go to, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly, and let us build us a city and a tower.——The name of it is called *Babel;* because the Lord did there confound the speech of all the earth."

If these words had been written for the express purpose of setting forth the building, not of the elder, but of the younger and greater Babylon, they could not have been more expressive either of the "building," or of the "confounding" that results from it. I speak not of the remains of the former confounding, the languages of all the nations, from the point of Alaska eastward, to the strait of Behring. This, though confounding enough in its way, in the varieties of feature, attire, speech, and pursuit, which reel to and fro in a mass and a manner, the lines traced by the individuals of which would baffle all the geometers that ever lived, is, after all, nothing to that con-

fusion which stands permanent, and that may in some measure be described, in the "buildings of the Babylon."

If, from the time of *Brute*, the grandson of pious Æneas, resulting from the *liaison* of that worthy with the chaste Dido, [you have it all in Geoffrey of Monmouth, and elsewhere;] if, from the year 1008 before the Christian epoch, when that great man, after having dined with the Warden of the Cinque-Ports at Dover, drank tea with the Archbishop and his family at Canterbury, supped to surfeiting on white-bait at the Crown and Sceptre at Greenwich, being thereby confined to his chamber for three days, which he spent in architectural study and meditation, thence passed to St. Catherine's (where the most unequivocal evidence of his residence was found by the excavators when making preparations for the Docks,) rising in the world, inventing turtle and custard, being alderman of the Tower-ward, and perishing of excessive infarction on the day of his own election to the civic chair: [the original Guildhall having been built 1340 years before by Magog, the son of Japhet, — as witness his effigies there to this day, — the which Magog was the first Jew that visited England, and he came over in a lighter made of the elephant end of the ark, of which the curious may yet

obtain specimens in the piles taken from under the piers of London bridge;]—if from his time, a time the mere allusion to which completely (*ecce signum*) confuses my speech, Chaos himself had been surveyor, and Chance builder, there could not have been more confusion than is displayed in the Babylonian structures at the present time. Masses of dingy brick, dull stucco, and dirty stone,—exhibiting more variety in their integral forms, and more irregularity in their aggregations, than the component parts of the globe assumed, when, after they had been created in a fluid state, they were allowed to arrange themselves according to the law of crystallization,—follow one another in the most perfect disorder that can possibly be imagined. In most other places you can see, or, which is very much the same, imagine you see, a reason why the buildings are situated and constructed thus or thus; but in the Babylon, the habitations of men, the depositories of accumulated wealth, the manufactories of wares, churches, palaces, prisons, public halls, monuments, every building which wealth can procure, or necessity or whim suggest, are all jumbled promiscuously together, as if the "Anarch old" had taken them up "in the hollow of his hand," and cast them from him in scorn.

In a city which has grown to its present magni-

tude through so long a lapse of ages, and had its augmentations from the varying tastes of so many generations of men — not to say from so many successive nations as have borne sway over it, no regularity of plan could be looked for; and as there has been, and could be, no single controlling spirit to regulate the whole of the additions that have been made, of later years, without the walls and liberties of the ancient city, no uniformity could be looked for in these. Confusion is therefore the essential principle—the unavoidable law in the aggregation of the Babylonian buildings; and that being the case, one need not wonder that there should be confusion also in the integral parts.

If contrast be an element of beauty and a cause of pleasure, that is obtained in full perfection in the Babylon. Avoiding the great thoroughfares, which, being all the best available for one purpose, that of shop-keeping, have there a considerable uniformity of appearance, if the Babylon were to be divided upon any line, the various strata exhibited by the section would present a singular appearance. Begin, for instance, at the extreme west northwards, the ancient locality of the tree of justice at Tyburn,—you have (or had lately,) hovels of the most limited dimensions — so very small that you might almost put one in each pocket —furnished in the meanest style, and tenanted by

persons of the most abandoned, or, at any rate, of the most neglected character. Pass on a little, and you have the decent, blended with a sprinkling of the fashionable. Onward still, and you have high life; out of which you pass into the purlieus of High-street, Marybone, and find, to your astonishment, that in a few minutes you are at the antipodes. It is but the threading of an alley and the turning of a corner, and you have high life again. Thence, till you pass Tottenham-court-road, you meet with no absolute splendour and no perfect squalor; but that being passed, and also a dozen or two of "Irishmen to let," you are in the Land of Promise — the dingy desolation of St. Giles, and yet the most populous (pigs not included) in the whole Babylon. Thence your line lies upon professional ground; and you may have phlebotomy, bodily or bursal, at any price, according as you call in square, in street, or in lane, till you clear the intricate mazes of Gray's-inn, and find yourself in the dirty alleys about Leather-lane. If your pocket is not picked there, pass on, and you may have your business done legally on either side of Holborn; or illegally, if your time be fitly chosen, in that conglomerate of abominations which is between Saffron-hill and Smithfield, and excels in frowsiness and filth the unclean tide of Fleet-ditch, that welters, polluting and polluted, in the sewer below. Of all

the Babylon this is, physically speaking, the valley of the shadow of death, and Death himself is not far distant.

Upon the slope to the eastward, but hidden from the public view by masses of brick and tile—and very properly hidden in as far as the sight is concerned, though somewhat doubtfully as to the health—there are the altars of the butchers, which reek daily with the blood of thousands of the choicest beeves;—and, as a sort of contrast, a neutralizer of the fame of that, there is, lower down, a fringe of holes, from which there issues a yet ranker perfume; for there the Babylonian horses, having in the prime of life been pampered by the great, and by them preferred above the biped race, and in their decline falling from one depth of misery to another, till their once noble natures and high spirit at length yielded to the combined power of cruelty and privation, are converted into food for the Babylonian curs. Why, in the very centre of the greatest and the wealthiest city on the face of the earth—of the city, too, which gives itself the greatest airs about the cleanliness of its habits and its care over the lives and comforts of mankind—the elements of so much pollution and disease should be congregated together, is more than singular; but there they are, and though there be occasional growls at them, there they are likely to remain.

You escape thence, and find yourself among the pens, and oxen, and horses of Smithfield; and when you look at the human beings by whom it is frequented, you almost sigh that the number of your feet is not doubled,—even though you have but just left the place to which the four-footed beings that are now before you must very soon find their exit.

Next comes a pile which, haply, your late visitations may have rendered partially necessary—the Hospital of St. Bartholomew, which, like most establishments of the kind, is a place where experiments are made on the poor and destitute, for the better curing of the ailments of those who can afford to pay the doctor. Still they are valuable institutions, not for this reason only, but for the number of those to whom health is restored or the bed of death smoothed and softened, and who would otherwise perish in the streets. Hospitals need watching, however, inasmuch as the human frame is useful for experiments—both alive and dead.

Leaving this Hospital, you come to an hospital of another kind—Christ's Hospital, where a certain number of persons find comfortable livings without absolute exhaustion, and where a certain number of the sons of those who have influence with the governors, whether they may need it or not (and

the more they need it, the less likely are they to get it) receive at the cost of the foundation perhaps as good an education—as they would get elsewhere for a fourth part of the money.

Narrow lanes, which are principally occupied by wholesale warehousemen, occupy the space till you come to the Temple of Magog in King-street, Cheapside; and thence through the Bankrupt court, you soon arrive at those habitations of the universal Idol, the Bank of England, the Exchange, and the Hell of Bartholomew-lane—into which if you incautiously enter, you will be flayed as certainly, though not exactly in the same way, as the Saint. Thence eastward, till you come opposite the Tower, are warehouses of more ample size; and dwellings bearing the marks of being once the habitations of the great, retired from the narrow streets in courts, and altogether unlike the modern part of the Babylon, either in the shopping thoroughfares, or the abodes of the fashionable, claim your attention. They carry you back to times when the seat of majesty was in the east end of the Babylon; when those apartments which now contain bars of iron, contained the Barons of England; and when the depots which now contain only the sweets vended by the grocer and the brewer's apothecary, were enriched with those choicer sweets, the Beauties of the land,

When you think of these remains of times now lapsed and all but lost; when you survey the massy walls, the deep carvings, the wide and heavy stairs, the spacious apartments, and all the substantiality of old English state; and when you contrast them with the dull straight walls, the sentry-box looking porches, the verandahs ill suited to the climate, and all the "imported things," (and things not imported,) out of which the modern town residence of a man of fashion is hashed up, you cannot help doubting which way the current of architectural taste has set in the abodes of those who, from wealth and supposed taste, should have the control of it in the matter of private dwellings. One part of the memorials must, however, give you pleasure: the Tower, which has been the theatre of so many royal murders and cruel oppressions of the people, is now a mere storehouse for beasts and baubles and warlike instruments; the subterraneous passages, through which the captive often essayed in vain to creep to liberty and life, are now undisturbed save by the mewing of a wandering cat at the grating, or the yells and squeaks of an encounter in which the assembled rats take vengeance upon the wanderer for the havoc which the furry tribe have committed upon the murine broods.

While, meditating upon the deeds of time, and

absorbed by the thoughts of the past, you hurry onward heedless of the present, the chance is, that you will be across the Minories, and, if it be a day of public bargain and sale, you are buried in the singular heap of an Israelite's stall, at the very entrance of Rosemary-lane. Here your notice of the building of the Babylon is, at least so far as bricks and mortar are concerned, suspended for a time; no part of these, and hardly any of the pavement of the street, which is neither a wide nor a clean one, is to be seen. It seems as though you had got into the pit where the Hebrew prophet of old was confined, and that all the "cast clouts and rotten rags" in the world were brought around you. The walls up to the very eaves, poles, hooks, lines, shelves, and all sorts of means and instruments of projection and suspension, are loaded to the utmost that they will bear; while legless tables, seatless chairs, bottomless kettles, stuccoed shoes, in which the cracks and holes are concealed by glue and coffin black, bent nails, bits of old iron,—every thing, in short, which you would suppose every body would be glad to throw away—are here accumulated to the depth of several feet; and ever and anon some human being, with a complexion like the last visible tint of the evening sky, copper and saffron, with eyes like two little pots of treacle, solicits you to become the

owner of some portion of the precious collection. The lane is not naturally short; and the dislike which you have to it, and the difficulty of your escape, lengthen it almost to "the crack o' doom." You instinctively look into the rat-holes which open toward each hand, in the hope of finding some lateral means of escape, but you as instinctively turn back with a shudder. To your observation not one of them is a thoroughfare, and the place where you are, with all its abominations, is purity to them; you are therefore constrained to move on as fast as ever you can, and are thankful when you find yourself in no other danger than that of being crushed by the wheel of a waggon, or jostled into the kennel by a tar, who, though upon land, certainly is yet "half-seas over."

How singular the change that time has worked here! When you were in the abodes of the merchants, it was a little odd to find that knights had given place to kilderkins of butter, and belles to bags of ginger; but here, in the very walk where the neck threw down the gauntlet to the lily, and the lip to the rose, and where the eye scrupled not to measure its beams with those of the sun—here, to find the beauty changed to ugliness, and the glory metamorphosed into rags, is really a contrast!

To those who love to dally with the idea, that all which delights the eye and enraptures the

heart; should be immortal, there is nothing more humiliating and heart-rending than such a contrast as this. Where the gilded chariot spun lightly along, the waggon-wheel now grates with its unwieldy bulk; where once you could have made sure of the soft smile and the simpering bow of the courtier, you now have a porter's burden run against your head, or the elbow of a coalheaver delved into your ribs; the perfumes are gone; and the charcoal, carbonic acid, and the villainous products of steaming, founding, brewing, sugar-baking, tallow-melting, soap-boiling, and all the plagues of the catalogue of fumes and vapours, compel you to swallow an atmosphere so dense that you could almost cut it with a knife, and so acrid that it almost closes your organs of respiration.

You either return to breathe the fresh air and to enjoy the beauties, rational or irrational, of the west; or you hurry onward to Greenwich, and, after admiring the splendour of the asylum, which England has prepared for her brave men, who dash away the battle from her cliffs, you climb the hill to gaze upon the *coup d'œil* of that which you have found so chequered in the details.

If you take the latter course, and if the day be fine, and the hour be such as to give you the proper proportions of light and shade — a dry wind from the soft south, the while, absorbing the mois-

ture, and dropping the charcoal upon the heads of the dull dwellers in Hoxton, Homerton, Hackney, and Shackelwell—you feel as though you had leaped at one bound, in autumn, from the incessant rain and fog of Iceland to vine-clad slopes by the Garonne, or the orange groves of Andalusia. Not a jot of frowsiness is in the landscape. Nothing but the busy stream seen through the trees in the foreground, with its million of masts, like a Brazilian grove, and the gilded wherries, skimming along like the painted tenants of that clime of gorgeous hues. Then, in the middle field, tower upon tower, and spire after spire, till you cannot count them, vanishing off in the distance to you know not where, with the lofty dome and beaming cross of St. Paul's, towering in the centre and appearing to command the whole. This is the proper point from which to admire the Babylon. If you would maintain your admiration of great cities, great kings, and all great things and men, keep your distance,—approach not.

Should you take the other course, the probability is that your feelings might not be so pleasurable. It is true that you can double your observation by taking another route; or, better still, you may make your escape by the water, and there, if the lowness of the tide should not disclose

to you too much of the bedstead of the old river, you would see much of the glory of the Babylon, while the shame would be to a considerable extent concealed. The Custom-house, of which they at first forgot the foundation, is worth being seen from the river. The new bridge, though any thing but elegant, is substantial; and though it must limit the period of each tide for navigation, and occasionally give the folks above rather "too much of water," yet it must increase the healthiness of the city, by the more complete and rapid change of the atmosphere, and it may admit some of the ooze to be scoured away. The southwark, though half the iron be useless, pleases you; and you are vexed that on the city side it should lead only to the Mansion-house, and that by a very narrow street. Blackfriars you do not much like. It smells of gingerbread. The contour is pretty well, but the details are trifling; the columns on the piers are like walking-sticks, placed where nobody can see them; the stone has been badly chosen,—has been, in many instances, "laid on the wrong bed;" and there are, about the whole, symptoms of decay, which ought not to appear in so recent a structure. It is pity, too, that this bridge should have been built at the very point where the ground is lowest on the city side, and where, in the mean time, there is no direct road to the north.

Had it been placed opposite St. Paul's, many objections would have been obviated. One of the worst things about Blackfriars bridge, and the one which must contribute more effectually than any other to the shortening of its duration, is the manner in which the road-way has been Macadamized. It has been peeled down to the very arch stones; and a spongy covering has been put over it, which, by absorbing and retaining the water, must, in time, extract the mortar, rot the stones, and tumble the whole into the Thames. Nor are the dangers confined to the bridge,—they reach the passengers; and one would have thought, if the name of the architect had not been recorded, that it had been a great man-trap, invented by the celebrated divine who in the most Christian manner (I mean spirit) maintains that the people of any well-inhabited country are the most useless, and therefore the most desirable to be got rid of, of all the chattels contained in it. Of this conspiracy against the durability of Blackfriars bridge, and the limbs and lives of the crowds of pedestrians by whom it is daily frequented, the original engineer is not, in any degree, guilty; because he was beyond any accession, either of good or of evil, when the deed was perpetrated; but that, upon a structure which is so thronged, the foot-paths should be two or three feet above the carriage-way, without any pa-

rapet or fence to protect the lieges, is really too bad, while the curve of pavement, worn smooth as glass, by which, at each approach, and more especially at the steepest one, the pedestrian is in constant danger of being jerked under the feet of horses or the wheels of carriages, is still worse.

In the Strand bridge there is a delightful combination of strength, beauty, and convenience; and in the Babylon, or elsewhere, it is hard to tell where we may look upon its equal. [*Nota bene.* Report has it, that the party who really made the plan of this classical and substantial structure, begged to be permitted to enter the infirmary of a common prison, there to die, while some persons connected therewith amassed princely fortunes. Truly, if report understands what she proclaims, and blows a true trumpet, "the race is not to the swift, neither is the battle to the strong."]

The bridge which, very appropriately, connects certain houses in Westminster with Astley's Amphitheatre and the great den of mental aberration in Saint George's Fields, has none of the classic appearance of that of the Strand; but it is withal a very solid and substantial erection; and it forms a limit, beyond which you need not go, if your object be to recruit, amid the present fashion of the West, those spirits which have been damped and de-

stroyed by thinking on the departed glories of the East.

As even by this route you have seen details, and not the enchanting distance-view of the Babylon, in which all its deformities and offensive parts are lost, it is probable that the cloud which the thoughts of the East had brought upon you may still remain, and that you may carry forward into the future the same fate for the West, of which you have witnessed the melancholy reality in the East. Posting toward that larger lobe of the respirative organ of the Babylon, you may mark the ground where the gay ones of the time display the taste of the horsedealer, the tailor, and the milliner; the Rotten-row, the walk, and the soft shade of the Royal Gardens at Kensington; in which latter place, defended by a rampart and fosse, the fair contemplate the fond, and the beauty of England selects from its chivalry without suspicion and without danger; and you may think, and that too not without some colour and some substance of truth, that as the East is, so may the West be. That ride may be turned into a dray-drive; that promenade into a locality for porters; the basins in St. James's Park, and the gardens in the rear of the *butroid* palace, may be done into docks; and where the gardens now are, and the beauties of art

triumph over the beauty of nature, there may at some future period, and that less distant than one is aware of, be the same display of frippery and frowsiness which makes one's heart to bleed, and one's hands instinctively to take hold of one's pockets, in Rosemary-lane. The only sure consolation (if consolation it may be called) that a musing man of the present day would find in all this field of melancholy is, that most likely he shall not live to see it; and that is somewhat like the sword which the kind friends of Job furnished him, to fight the cares of life withal—more cutting in the handle than in the blade.

From the train of reflections to which this would lead, one is glad to turn to any thing—to a few hasty remarks on the architecture of the Babylon.

What most forcibly struck me as the general character of the Babylonian architecture is, that the useful of it is not ornamental, and the ornamental is not useful. I do not mean this to apply to separate structures having their separate intentions, as that a coal-yard should be inclosed with marble palisades, or a porter brewery painted and gilt; that there should be lodgings to let in the Monument, or that laundresses should fasten their clothes-lines to the great Green Man in Hyde Park; though the last would be no great sin against the congruities, inasmuch as, according to the gloss

of the most learned commentators, the green man (by the way this cannot be the "Green Man and Still," or, as they very properly call him in France, *L'homme verd et tranquil*, because the passions of this one are a good deal ruffled)—the green man has just been washing his own linen, has hung it on his shoulder to dry, and is defending it with angry looks, elevated "pot-lid," and clenched fist. I do not mean that buildings only useful should be ornamental, or that those which are merely ornamental should be useful; because, within its own proper sphere, each of these becomes not the opposite of the other, but its vice, or, if you will, its synonyme. Use is an ornament, and an ornament too of a far higher mental and moral character than that of which no utility can be predicated; as, for instance, there is an intellectual beauty in a steam-engine, which takes its place, I know not how high, above all the fine forms that have been left to us by the Grecian chisel. And why? The best of these give us only the corporeal substance, while that represents the spiritual essence as having flung aside the mortal incumbrance, and being in the act of moulding the elements—binding the fire, the air, and the water, to the chariot-wheel of man, so that he may turn the earth to his purpose, and have dominion, not merely over "every living thing that creepeth upon the face of the earth," but over

the depth of the mine and the dimensions of the ocean.

Use and ornament, utility and beauty, are not opposite things. They conduce to the same end —giving pleasure; and that to which they give pleasure, through all their modifications, is the same in essence—the human mind; though, as modified by circumstances, it adapts itself to all the varieties of nature, and produces all the varieties of art. When it runs strongly in any one direction, it becomes habit in the individual, and custom or fashion in society; men fall into and follow it, and lose sight of the other modes, they know not how. This strong tendency to follow one thing exclusively, and to the neglect of every thing else, is the cause of perfection in mere manual execution, and the bane of it in every thing that demands thought and invention. Take, as an instance, a common portrait-painter. His faces are all very well, though in the anatomy they all have a family likeness,—are the same walls, only they are very differently stuccoed; but if, to please some fastidious customer, he should be obliged to depart from the round flat face, and introduce an ear, what a production that is! and if he become a *genius*, and dash off some figure in "a fine frenzy rolling," every limb and lineament of it

tells you a different story. The eye looks as if you were to be run through, or knocked down; but you are safe, even though it were not a picture, for the muscles of the whole frame—the *extensors* and the *flexibors*—are all so equally excited, and, of course, pulling so equally against each other, that the angry man cannot move a finger. Sometimes, indeed, the same effect is produced by an unnatural excess of passion; and he who aims at doing more than he can, finds his arm drop useless by his side, or his whole frame fall helpless on the floor.

This is the cause of the general defect of the Babylonian architecture, as displayed by the majority of her architects. The utility and the beauty are not in the keeping of the same party: the common builder—the man who does the shop in the city, and the box in the suburb—knows not a thing about the principles of taste; and thus he does not improve upon the man who went before him,—he merely differs from him. Look at any two street fronts, and you can at once tell which has the greatest expanse, the largest windows, is made of the most costly materials, or even the most expensive in the erecting; but you cannot, upon any principle which you can explain, say which is the most beautiful. Look at any line of detached residences,

or compare any two private mansions: all that you can come at is difference of situation, difference of size, and difference of price. But situation and size are both marketable commodities; and therefore, in the private habitations of the Babylonians, whether within the city or near it, one single standard of architectural (and I may add of all other) taste is introduced and acted upon—the current coin of the realm; and were language adapted to the facts, the expressions ought to be, a building "as plain as five hundred pounds, as snug as a thousand, as handsome as ten thousand, or as elegant as a million." That is to say, there is in the people of the Babylon no architectural taste whatever; and therefore, when they come to construct a public building—one which they intend shall be an ornament—they are obliged not only to import what they call taste, but to take the word of the importer whether it be taste or not. I have said that the Strand bridge is a tasteful structure; but they to whose purses the public are indebted for that, would gladly part with it if they could find another that would yield them a greater per centage, even though that other were as incongruous and patched as the last of the new Churches, or as senseless as the new Courts at Westminster.

The first principle of rational architecture is

adaptation to the climate, the situation, and the use; and if that be not attended to, all the rest goes for very little, or rather for a great deal the wrong way. A Grecian or a Roman temple may be a very beautiful thing in itself, though certainly it wants the magic sublimity of an Egyptian one; and it may have been the very best adapted for the climate, the situation, the costume, and the manners of those people. Still it by no means follows, that it, or any part of it, should be the acmé of perfection—the model after which all that can be received as ornament must be shaped, and besides which all is tasteless and vulgar. As the tastes of the inventors of these temples must have been produced by the circumstances under which they were placed, they must have been in harmony with all the other parts of the character both of the country and the people. If, then, the Babylonians are to be tied to them in one thing, congruity demands that they should be tied to them in every thing,—that is, every thing that is mere art, or fashion, or fancy, and does not rest upon any scientific principle. Their language should be spoken, their dress worn, and all their customs restored: Kemble should spout from a cart; Southey sing ballads in the streets; Malthus live in a tub; the "black broth" drive away turtle from the Man-

sion house; and (but, by the way, we are not very unlike them in that) the courts of law and equity should grope their way in the dark.

The open styles, the wide intercolumniations, the frosted mouldings, and all the appearances of the public architecture of the Greeks and Romans, impress one with ideas of a clear and dry atmosphere, and an unlimited command of stone in huge blocks; and therefore, they are out of keeping with the moist and acrid air of the Babylon, and the natural material, brick. The older style of this country, which those who prefer the importation, call *Gothic* in derision—though these same Goths were able to beat the inventors of the other—is much more in keeping with the climate and the materials of England. There is never the appearance of a vast pressure upon a straight lintel, or architrave, there; nay, when the best adapted curves are used, such as the logarithmic spiral in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, there does not appear to be any pressure even upon the pillars,—the roof melts away from the pillar, just as the mass of foliage does from the bole of a tree, and you are no more apprehensive of the fall of the one than of the other. The grand difference between the two styles of architecture, leaving mere appearance out of the question, seems to be, that the Grecian and Roman is all mere art—an attempt to

produce form, and leave the stability to the materials; while the other is scientific, depending less upon the natural mass or cohesion of the materials, than upon the skill with which they are put together. Hence the airy lightness of the parts of a Gothic structure; hence the binding and bearing of the mass; and hence not only their durability, but the ease with which any one stone in them can be replaced when it decays.

This is not the case with a Roman building. St. Paul's is certainly the largest, and probably the best in the Babylon. But the columns forming the prostyle at the grand entrance of St. Paul's are either counterfeits, do not support that which they appear to support, or not one of them could be repaired without bringing down the whole entablature and pediment. The dome of St. Paul's, too, that grand pole-star of the Babylonian youth, when they lose their reckoning on their hebdomadal peregrinations, does not rise up in that proud strength of independence in which a dome ought to rise. It is a giant in size, no doubt; but, like Gog and Magog in the procession on Lord Mayor's-day, it is a giant of lath which cannot support itself, but must be borne up by something which is concealed under the frippery. Were it not for the cone of bricks, and the framing of timber, the whole of this splendid dome (and I admit

willingly that it is splendid) would soon be on the ground.

How different is the case with the Abbey of St. Peter's at Westminster, though it be nearly seven hundred years the senior of St. Paul's. The external stone has, no doubt, crumbled away, and been replaced, and bungling hands have been laid on some parts of the structure, as witness the patchwork architecture of the two great towers, and the stupid bundle at the centre of the cross, looking like a dirty trunk on the top of a state coach; but, notwithstanding all these and other minor abominations, enough remains to impress you with an idea of true grandeur in a public building devoted to solemn, religious, and national purposes. The massy buttresses, the admirably balanced spandrels, the pinnacles, the windows, have all that harmony and keeping about them, which makes you feel that durability and strength are essential to every part of the fabric, and that there is nothing in or about it, that stands in the least need of concealed support.

There can be no doubt the great Wren—unquestionably the greatest of all those who have been constrained to follow the Babylonian style of building, which, as was formerly said of the speech of another age,

" Is English cut on Greek and Latin,
Like fustian heretofore on satin,"—

had many difficulties to contend with in the construction of St. Paul's; at least he had to contend with those two master-difficulties, which, while the notions about churches and cathedrals remain as they are at present, must render it quite impossible to use Grecian or Roman architecture for a church, and more especially for a cathedral. A steeple, be it tower, or spire, or obelisk, or pagoda, or any number of them sliced and laid upon the top of one another by turns, has no more connexion with a Greek or a Roman temple, than an English member of St. Stephen's has with buying the *free* at twenty pounds a tongue, or than a Scotchman has to come that way through the "open order of ministers," booing to the dust, and crying, "Wha wants me?" But, somehow or other, a church is not a church, unless it has a steeple: some say, because the steeple is a sort of moral thunder-rod, which wards off a great deal of sin; and others say, because the church and steeple together, from the formerly mentioned similarity they have to a watchman's rattle, keep the parson in constant remembrance of his duty. Be these reasons as they may, the fact is certain, that the steeple is as clear a proof of the orthodoxy of the

church, of its consecration by episcopic hands, as the triangle of the face, standing on the base and not on the vertex, is of orthodoxy in a preacher. Thus, even Wren, whenever he had to put a steeple to a building, upon which were placed the columns and other attributes of the ancient architecture, uniformly failed,—need I add, that every other who tries the same must fail?

With a cathedral the case is still worse; for whether we adopt the common theory that the form of the cross is borrowed from the symbol of the atonement—a theory which is rendered a little doubtful by the fact that the first Christian churches in Syria and Asia Minor were not of this form—which does not appear to have been introduced till the men of the North embraced the Christian religion; or whether we take up the hypothesis of the hammer of Thor, we are unable to connect the general structure of the cathedral with any thing Greek or Roman. It is somewhat remarkable, and may confirm the proverb, that "What is not in the hall may be in the hut," that the houses of the Northmen, in Iceland, some parts of Norway and Lapland, and the less changed parts of Scotland, are still constructed in the form of the hammer of Thor, or nearly that of a cathedral. "Outshots" project laterally from the main body of the house; the longer, and not un-

frequently the *western* part to which these are attached, is the common room,—one outshot being the porch or "hallan," and the other a place where labour can be carried on without any interference with the domestic economy; and the smaller portion, usually the *eastern* one forming the *sanctum sanctorum* in the better houses, and the cowhouse in those of an inferior description. I build no theory upon this; but, as the origin of the whole Grecian and Roman architecture has been referred to the rude hut, and the accident of the acanthus, the basket, and the tile, they who do these things may, if they choose, discard both the cross and Thor's hammer, and call the cathedral an improvement upon the common dwelling-house of the men of the North.

Whatever it may have come from, it is clear that it could come from no temple or other building of the Greeks or the Romans; and therefore no human ingenuity can form a rational union between it and their architecture. However well, or at whatever expense it be done, it is a translation, and one of those translations in which one must translate the subject as well as the words. "Hudibras," or "Tam o' Shanter," would be just as true to their nature and spirit, if wholly rendered into those words which are allowed to be classical Greek, as a Grecian temple with a spire

at the end of it, is when called a church, or a little one thrown across the back of a big one, and called a cathedral; and one need ask no better practical proof of this, than the fact that these form none of the useful part of the structure. The columns are set up in order to support the entablature, and the entablature is laid upon them for no other purpose than that the columns may have something to support—and there is an end of the matter.

In civil architecture the case is not very much better. It is all very well to have columns supporting a portico, or propping up the flat roof of a very large apartment; and when, in either of these cases, the column appears to be useful, there is not much objection to a pilaster against it on the wall; but columns, portions of columns, or pilasters close by or on the walls of a house, and supporting nothing but their own entablatures, are so obviously unconnected with the utility of the building, that one cannot help wondering why they got there;—they are like lace upon a coat—in times of taste, emblems of servility. Yet so inveterate is this (want of) taste, that the rulers of Gog have put a Roman attic to the Guildhall; they of St. Stephen have, in the same fashion, made a crypt of that the most beautiful of pure Gothic structures; they of West-

minster Hall, have given each of the corbels there the benefit of a supporter, something between a Tuscan pilaster and a poker; while the man who muddled up the judges, first made half the Gothic side of the square Roman, and then half the Roman Gothic, leaving a peep between the termination and the tower of the Hall, through which the nakedness of the land is seen to admiration. And then the interior: one enters from a splendid hall, by an unparalleled corridor, to—the Lord knows what!

This is the dead-weight—the millstone which custom, unsupported by reason, and therefore the more inveterate, has hung round the necks, not of the Babylonian architects merely, but of those of the whole country; and till it shall be cut away, and the free fancy have scope to create, and the native taste to adapt itself to the circumstances of the country, we cannot hope for any thing like an architectural taste.

Look at the structures which have been copied and composed by Smirke—we dare not call it designing, (a tailor that should borrow the patterns of all the pieces could not be said to design a coat)—they are said to be the most classical; but they are, one and all, as heavy as pigs of lead: dead walls, dingy colonnades, and, if the light does not come from some aperture that is not seen,

they must be as dark as Erebus. At a theatre, or any building where no light is wanted from without, this classical style, notwithstanding all its heaviness, may do; but where there are windows in the case, the rooms must be of an useless elevation, the columns must be paltry and dwarfish, or there must be two or three rows between the base and entablature, which instantly suggests the idea of a plain house shut up in the colonnade as in a cage—something English in the gripe of a foreigner, from which one longs to deliver it. Columns are obviously intended to be used where there is no wall, just as crutches are where there are no legs; and to use pillars close to a wall, and especially let into it, is much the same as if a man, whose legs were sound, should take to a pair of crutches in order to walk more gracefully. It may be said that these attached columns and pilasters strengthen the wall; but that which supports a wall should give a lateral and not a vertical pressure. The buttress, approaching nearer and nearer to the abutment of the arch of the aisle, and then throwing its spandrel against the corbel from which the main roof springs, both gives strength and seems to give it; but, whatever strength the pillar may give to the wall, it does not seem to give any. Still, if we must have all our public buildings (and as much of our private ones as ever we can)

Greek and Latin, Smirke is the preferable man of the day, because his buildings are the least Babylonian. He gives us the article 'neat as imported;' and that, though it reduces the architect to the condition of a mere pipe for transmitting the ideas of others, proves that he is a clean pipe, and does not taint that which he transmits.

Nash is more doubtful, and certainly, as a pipe for the transfusion of ancient architecture, a greater bore than Smirke. He Macadamizes the ancient edifices, and garnishes the bits. Want of union, and that hectic flush which portends dissolution, are the ideas which all his structures, and especially the New Palace for the King, always suggest to me. His details are always rich, often too rich (as witness the *Treasury* in gaudy Corinthian—which will be out of all rule if the *lords thereof* do not wear muffs and pelisses, and caps of Brussels lace over their wigs); and his façades are sometimes pretty. But they are like the pretty scenes of Stanfield at Old Drury; you clap your hands when they first appear, admire them for a moment, and then long to see them shifted.

To me at least,—and those who differ from me may do it and welcome,—there always comes a most painful twinge of mortification when I see Englishmen, who certainly have elements of greatness, and, which is more to the purpose, of goodness, that Greece

or Rome never possessed, going to those nations for houses to put them in. The Greeks, notwithstanding their skill in the arts, in Greece Proper, or Asia, do not appear ever to have had much science. The Greeks were a nest of little principalities, always squabbling with each other, and despising the rest of the world (of the greater part of which they were ignorant) as barbarians; and the Romans were a people who carried on an unprovoked war of extermination. Does Old England circumvolve the world for any such purpose? There have been times when she partially made the attempt, and the din of what she has *permitted* has not yet died away among the echoes of the eastern mountains. But in these latter times the day-spring of light and liberty has arisen; and she has gone forth with the olive-branch in one hand, and the Encyclopædia in the other, and wherever her foot falls, there freedom is born, and there the arts spring up. Will it last?—is it lasting?

Wherefore, then, should one never be able to approach any of the springs of those our national glories—glories which are peculiarly ours, as with us they originated—without being put in mind of the squabbles of the Greeks and the butcherings by the Romans? If our national character has shot up and shone forth a goddess who, at every inch of the earth's cincture, receives the love and

the adoration of the free, why should there not be genius enough in the country to build her an appropriate temple? What has Jupiter Stator done for us that the place where the council of our King deliberates should be his monument? Or how can it add to the grandeur of an English King, that he should dwell in the temple of Antoninus and Faustina, or the baths of Dioclesian?

The absurdity is not, however, the worst; for with those monumental remains constantly before our eyes, with our kings, and our counsellors, and all those to whom we look with respect, packed-up as it were in the coffins of nations—and of nations, too, which perished of corruption and disease, how can we avoid dreading that the infection may be caught, that we too may become corrupt and perish; and that the monument of England's mighty genius, may one day be as desolate as those of the Athenian Minerva and the Roman Jupiter?

Often have I been almost mad with vexation when I have thought of these things; often have I wished that some architectural Bacon would arise and smash the fetters of the five orders, with the same bold and skilful hand as Francis Bacon smashed those of the ten categories; or that some Brougham of buildings would stand up in the Senate-house, and rend away the ancient cerecloth in

which the free spirit of the country is smothered up like a mummy, with the same terrible grasp with which Henry Brougham rends the mantle of ancient hypocrisy from the politics, the law, and the sluggard-fattening charity of the country; often too have I wished that I had been a man of genius that I might possess, or a man of wealth that I might purchase, the talent necessary for this purpose, instead of a solitary, simple, and insignificant wanderer in quest of that which I can neither feel nor find. From the professional architects we can hardly hope for it. They are "in the rut;" in that rut their pupils must follow them, at least as far as experience goes; they who have attempted to come out have fallen in the attempt.

Soane, for instance, with his *antefixa*, like little cakes of gingerbread stuck up in all sorts of places, has had the misfortune to make all that he has touched look little, by a sort of architectural *bijouterie*. And then for his *restored* capital, said to be from the temple of the Tiburtine Sibyl, or something else, at Tivoli, or some other place: I should rather think that it had belonged to the other Sibyl—the Cumæan lady; that she had been the lady of a market-gardener; that her "leaves" had been cabbage-leaves; that the removal of the caterpillared ones on the outside had made the cabbage more saleable, and that the cab-

bage with the said leaves on had suggested the idea of the capital. No disparagement to any one in this; for the English name of the acanthus, which suggested the other capital, is not by half so handsome a word as "cabbage." As history is silent upon this important matter, I throw out this merely as a conjecture; but that I may not appear to be trifling with the reader, I may mention that there is some philosophy in the conjecture: whenever a work of art suggests the idea of any particular production of nature, one may always safely conclude that that production of nature had been the model. Now, I have never been able to look at the capital in question without thinking of a cabbage, and saying involuntarily to myself, "What nests of young caterpillars must be within those leaves; they are so much crumpled together!"

Perhaps I should apologise to the reader—if any such should get this length, (to the critic I need say nothing—he, poor fellow! must live,)—for having so often appealed to myself in the course of this chapter; but really there is nothing else to which I can appeal. By a very slight transposition, "the Board of Works" becomes "a work of boards;" and it is vexatious, even in a pecuniary point of view, to see the fooleries of which it is guilty. Besides this, there is no model of the thing we want. When England had an architectural

taste of her own, the churchmen and the barons had it all their own way; and, therefore, a cathedral and a castle are, except a hall, the only models we have. Now neither of these is the model of such a palace as should be found in the Babylon, or indeed for any public structure for civil purposes; and I hesitate not to say that, if those who have voted so very much money for building within these few years, had begun by "chopping up the Boards for firewood, and then put themselves on their country," they would have found the requisite talent, and the appropriate buildings, for far less than the perishable patch-work has cost. Durability is the grand requisite in national buildings; and it is provoking that the only royal thing in the Babylon that has this property, is the grave—the sepulchre of the kings at Westminster.

As they have "done their do" upon the royal residence, there is no saying but, if the indignation of the people avert not, they may also trick out the senate-houses in the frippery of the stage—to which the royal porch at the Lords' is one approach. Should this be the case, the inmates had better doff their eloquence and their gravity, and betake themselves to pursuits in keeping with their places. Let the upper house strut and spout upon the boards, the bench of bishops, each brandishing a

fiddlestick, "discourse sweet music" in the orchestra, and the collective wisdom mount into the gallery and thunder as gods.

From the fooleries of the Babylonian builders it is delightful to escape to Windsor, and mark the magic which good taste has done there; the whole is so English, so ample, and so old. Those stupendous galleries, those magnificent apartments, those glorious oriel windows, from which the eye can at one glance sweep round half the horizon, were not finished when I last saw them; but they told the tale of centuries, connected themselves with the whole history of England, and were an artificial memory of all the movements by which she has risen to her present splendour. *That* is a *country* palace worthy of the king and the nation; would that we had town palaces *likewise* as well as *also!*

It is, indeed, pleasant to turn from any of those public buildings to the newly-made—that is, *laid out* grounds, by which they are accompanied; for the contrast of the landscape gardening with the architecture is as striking as can be well imagined. It seems that no dulness, no selfishness, no taking down and building up, through the "filthy lucre" (and here it is very filthy) of the profits, can banish good taste altogether beyond the four seas. The headless and the heartless may chase it from one

thing after another in succession; but it always contrives to fix upon something else. It has been *ousted* from both the theatres—in the minor ones it never was; and many of the associations "of talent" have bid it good bye. There is not house-room for it with the Babylonian ballad-mongers, who indite sonnets on dolls, and dirges on dressing-cases, for the annual scum of the Babylonian press. Indeed there are hardly any of the instruments of wind and din, from the Apollonicon down to the man that boils the moon in rhyme, as you would boil a turnip in water, that has the smallest idea of what taste is. As to the buildings, again, we have only to look at them,—or rather to turn away with shame without looking. But in landscape gardening there is some taste—since we get rid of the dull walls and dingy avenues that were imported. Our proceeding in this is English—in keeping with the country and the climate. An alderman may still occasionally have a yew, a holly, or a box, *done* into the shape of a plum-pudding, or a tureen of soup; but fortunately those, which once were the rules—universal and stubborn ones—are now the exceptions; and however you may execrate the house, you find pleasure in the grounds. This is as it should be: the pleasure that we derive from these is pure and healthy; and we may defy even Nash, at Buckingham Gate, to give us the

blue devils. Our defences are two to one—we have St. James's Park in front, and the gardens in the rear. The Park is truly fine; for though the marks of the spade be hardly obliterated, you find some difficulty in persuading yourself that the place is spade-work at all. Every thing appears to be just as Nature had made it, and made it on the spot. One element, and that a very important element in this beauty, is the absence of every line and curve which a common observer can recognize as delineated by a tool. If the layer out of a pleasure-ground be ever found with a long ruler or pair of compasses in his hand, they should be taken from him and broken; and if you find him sticking pegs in the foci, and putting a doubled cord over them for the purpose of delineating an ellipse, the pegs should be flung at his head, and he should get a good lashing with the cord. For saucepans and kettles those forms are all very well, because the things are always instantly referable to human art; Nature, even in her wildest freak, never having been guilty of a kettle or a saucepan. But—and for the very same reason—those vulgar manufactured curves should never be admitted into that which is meant to imitate Nature. Her curves have all the litheness of living things; now almost straight, then gliding away till they leave a sharp curvature, and

playing this way and that way, till man with all his geometry be quite unable to divine either their quadrature or their genesis. The introduction of no curves but those of this natural and melting kind into the pleasure-grounds of the new palace, the gathering of the surface into swells, still avoiding the formal outlines, the adaptation of the clumps of shrubs and the water, all conduce to the most pleasing effect.

It is, however, in the gardens of the palace itself that the art is carried to its utmost perfection; and one requires to consider whether the two terminations, the palace at the one end and the triumphal arch at the other, deform the horticultural beauty, or set it off as foils. With the arch, as a thing, I have not much fault to find; and I have the satisfaction of being assured that not one ounce of wits has been wasted in the making of it, the entire model having come from somebody's portfolio. As a thing, too, it is pretty enough, though the top has something of a sarcophagus look. But the putting of it down—there is the blunder. It is on an acute angle between two public ways, and seems a merely ornamented partition between these. A gate, and above all the palace gate of the sovereign of a great and free people, should have an inviting air—should recede with a graceful curvature as if beckoning you to enter. At all events there should

be room for an equipage to turn. There is no such thing at the triumphal arch: it comes quite close up to the public road, without any place on which a donkey could be safe from the wind and collision of the passing coaches; and it juts out at you like the salient angle of a bastion or the point of a bayonet. It does not invite you; it threatens you off; and by being squeezed in between the two public thoroughfares, it forces upon you the idea, that in that to which it leads there is neither room nor welcome. Thus, though it may be a very pretty thing in itself, for which the English architect has no great merit, it is most abominably placed, of which the English planner must take all the censure. It is in fact, like all the other modern architectural ornaments of Babylon, out of place, quite unadapted to the situation, and affords another proof of the mischief of mere copying and combining engineers and architects, who have no knowledge and no feeling of nature and congruity. If they were obliged to have the gate in the angle and close by the road-side, then they should have made it a plain one—the plainer the better: but there was no absolute necessity for that—for making it a part of the mere line of road between Knightsbridge and Piccadilly; for they could just as easily have made it harmonize with that of which it is, or ought to be, a part—the palace. Had they gone

back a hundred yards, they would have got abundant frontage, they would have had a foreground of relief; and the gate might have been so flanked that the two parallel roads would have been lost sight of as it was approached. The public, for whose gaze and criticism it must be intended, would have seen it too, and seen it to some advantage; whereas the only thing that they can now see is the under-side of the cornice, and they can see that only while passing the front. Coming on it in flank, either from the west or the east, no body that had not seen it before, or had the "Picture of London" (one of the worst likenesses that ever was daubed) in his hand, could find out that it were a gate at all. A tomb is what it appears in that way; and the idea will not be destroyed by all the bronzes and bas-relief in the world.

Wherever, indeed, one can turn, one is always struck with the want of congruity between ornamental buildings and the places that they are wished to ornament. When a man or minister wants a fine building, he does not get some one to study the ground on which it is to be raised, or to consider how it may blend into a whole with the objects that are to surround it;—he trots off to a draftsman's portfolio and selects a picture, guided more frequently by the Indian ink and bistre with which it is worked out, than by the contour. When

the building is not to be paid out of his own pocket, he sometimes gets a model; but if he does, it is a model of the mere shell. He never models the ground; and he is seldom much influenced by the internal distribution; so that when it comes to be finished at some two or three times the original estimate, it is very useless as well as very ugly—and very often the more fine and costly that the solitary erection is in itself, the more hideous does it look from the want of agreement with the site. That is very much the case with the triumphal arch in question, and there is no want of other specimens.

When, however, one gets within the arch, and passes that artificial mount which the landscape gardener has most wisely put up to hide the deformity, nothing can be in finer taste than Buckingham Gardens. The extent is not great, and there were no means of "borrowing of the distance"—that admirable resource of the art, by which all the beauties of the surrounding country are made parts of a park, which has, thereby, the appearance of extending over twice as many miles as it really extends furlongs. Now, instead of there being any possibility of doing that at Buckingham Gardens, all the surrounding scenery had to be carefully excluded; and "the most" had to be made of the place itself. That

has been done very successfully; for though the whole grounds are not one mile in their largest dimension, they are so laid out as that, when one stands at the centre, even the nearest part of the boundary seems a mile off; and then it vanishes off in such a way as to leave you in doubt whether it be the boundary or not. This is effected by a combination of circumstances—the shape and disposition of the water, the clumps of trees, and the swells and depressions of the surface. One judges of distance, by the mass of air that comes between one object and another; and the air in the neighbourhood of the Babylon has, in many states of the weather, the effect of doubling or trebling the actual distance, as compared with the scenery in a hilly country where the atmosphere is transparent. This aid the horticulturist had from nature; but the fact of his having laid hold of it and turned it to account, is a proof that he was not a mere copyist, but a careful and successful student of nature. By whom these beauties were planned, I do not know—I suppose by Mr. Aiton, principal horticulturist to the King; but whoever designed them has great merit, from the perfectly good taste and congruity with which it is done.

Nor is success in this matter of landscape gardening confined to those who have studied that as a

profession; for when an architect leaves his pictures and his playthings, and comes fairly on the field, there is glory even for him. The Regent's Park was, if I be rightly informed, planned by the same man who bears the burden of the new palace; and certainly the one is a much finer thing than the other. Some of the terraces of buildings are ugly, it is true; and in many of them comfort is bartered for gingerbread; but there is a soul of grandeur about the whole, well calculated to redeem some of the minor imperfections and absurdities. The plantings are not yet so far advanced as to enable one to judge of the science of the whole—to ascertain whether the park be really a part of Middlesex, or only an insulated thing stuck on it; but as some of the connections could hardly fail to be kept, even though there had been a disposition not to keep them; and as it is not easy to find out what motive there could be for not keeping them, the best way is to be charitable, and hold that the thing has been done in the very best manner; and though this should turn out eventually not to be the case, the discovery can be fully made only by the folks of the next generation; and we of the present shall be allowed to enjoy our dream of perfection unbroken.

These symptoms in the Babylonian landscape are refreshing; and they promise a return to a

better system in the architecture, when the dead weights, under which it is pressed in the mean time, shall once be fairly made into bricks, and these used in so far replacing the tasteless and incongruous lumps with which they have loaded the earth and polluted the air.

Within the business part of the Babylon, one has no right to expect any thing like architectural taste, and even extreme durability or strength in the buildings is not desirable. The different kinds of business fluctuate from place to place, and therefore the houses require to be of a kind that can, at small expense, be adapted to the wants of the successive owners. That which at one time is the town-house of a noble, may, in the lapse of a few years, become a barber's shop; and as the barber is not so chary of his blockheads as the other, he wants a window of three times the size; and for this purpose he must have a house of which the lower part of the walls may be removed without any danger or injury to the superstructure. It must be admitted that the Babylonian builders understand this part of their business well. Indeed, in the whole of the merely mechanical part of this matter, there is little or nothing wherewith to find fault. The men who chip the wood, hew the stones, and daub with the plaster, are all very good men in their way; and the only thing wanted is an

Inigo Jones to look after the plans. Nor in the city is that absolutely necessary: the beauty of a city, other than good accommodation, clean and airy streets, and plenty of light, is a matter on which people have not absolutely made up their minds; and I could never pass along Regent-street, without thinking that ribbons, tape, wigs, and worsted night-caps, would look quite as well, and be quite as readily bought, if exhibited in a plain brick house, as when hung up between columns or caryatides.

The buildings that have a chance of being for a longer time devoted to the nobility, would demand somewhat of a different character,—a more permanent appearance, and some attempts at ornament and taste. In the latter of these requisites, many of them are woefully deficient. In the streets about Cavendish-square there are some ugly hulks, with a stucco front like a cake of gingerbread to the street, and rough brick walls full of blind windows in the other directions.

Even with the suburban villas one would not wish to quarrel very much. The people who inhabit them have not much taste, and therefore they run riot, each according to his fancy. The strife often seems to be, who shall have that which is most unseemly and inconvenient; but the property is their own; playing those fancies with it

gives them pleasure; and as the range of their pleasures, not of a merely animal nature, is not very wide, the two powerful motives of indolence and charity conspire to let them alone.

It is with the public buildings that one is disappointed and provoked; and it is to be feared that in these the jobbing and bad taste are so rooted as to be incurable.

CHAPTER V.

BABYLONIAN WAYS AND SUBWAYS.

"Above—below—all 's well."

So says the song, but no one who thinks of the ways and the subways of the Babylon, can help suspecting that the application is not there; and yet there is something so gigantic in the Babylonian ways and subways, that they are well worthy a little consideration. The endless succession of streets, the connecting lanes, the snug passages, the provoking *culs-de-sac*, the mire in winter, the dust in summer, and the continual abrasion of paving-stone, are all very marvellous to those who have not been accustomed to great cities. To one who has some little knowledge of the matter, the greatest wonder is the total want of science and system upon which these same streets and passages have been both laid out and paved. The former would not, perhaps, be very easily mended, because of the value of the property, and the reluctance which those who have

once succeeded in establishing a profitable business in any premises, have to allow those premises to go out of their hands. One would have thought, however, that in the Babylon, where the throng in the streets is so great, long ere now there should have been something like a fair division of that which is really the open street, and belongs to the public, between carriages and pedestrians. It might have struck a much duller man than any of the satraps under Gog and Magog would willingly allow themselves to be, that, as there are no fractions of carriages in the streets, unless when they break down, and cannot of course pass along, all the fractional parts of a carriage-breadth in the carriage-way should, from the very beginning, have been taken from that and added to the foot-pavement. There have been, I presume, surveyors of the pavements ever since the mayoralty of Gog; and if these have not been men of *nous*, they should have been, for they have generally taken care to be paid as such. But, somehow or other, the planning and engineering men belonging to the city have uniformly been the dullest dogs in the world; and though they have had time enough and money enough, I have never been able to learn that any thing was ever invented or improved by a *bonâ-fide* city engineer—no, not so much as a mouse-trap. As late as the year 1827, and when all the

glory of the city, much of that of the country, and the heir presumptive to the throne, were solemnizing the feast of Magog, with a vigour of spoon never equalled out of the Babylon, or exceeded in it, the lamps and some of the other garniture, which had been put up for the purpose of astonishing the guests, and letting them see that, though the hall be to a certain height Gothic, there has been classic taste enough in the Court of Aldermen to give it a Grecian roof, got so much ashamed of the bungling manner in which they had been put up, that down they dropped; and if their mass had not come first in contact with the substantial cranium of the Lord Mayor, there is no saying who might have been killed, or to what price black cloth and crape might have been raised. The serious catastrophe was, by that means, happily for all, averted, and the only casualty was a somewhat copious and supererogatory anointing with oil of those who were fat enough before; but as the "Genie of the lamps" had no share in the fabrication of the buckler—or rather the *boss*, which was the protection of the company, the shame to him—ay, and the sin too, for the matter was much too serious for simple shame—was much the same as if the event had been mortal.

I mention this, not because it is the most glaring instance of bungling on the part of the Baby-

lonian engineers, but because it is the most recent, and happened in the very centre and glory of the city; and thence it may be inferred, that if the surveyors cram themselves to such a degree that they are unable to mount a ladder and see that a carpenter does his work properly in the very hall, and when the object is to show off, it is not very likely that they would trouble themselves with a thing which every body tramples under foot, as is the case with a street.

Accordingly, every pavior was his own engineer and surveyor: the wide streets had a centre pavement of so many carriages and a half; and the narrow ones, especially if they were great thoroughfares for pedestrians, had one of two carriages and three quarters, while the side pavement was only the quarter of a common-councillor, and consequently not the tithe of an alderman.

Within these twelve months, indeed, a system somewhat better has begun to be introduced; and in the introduction of it, if my information be correct, there has been a verification of the old declaration in the fable, that "there is nothing like leather,"—a most intelligent and public-spirited dealer in that article having been the first person who put the engineers and surveyors of pavements of the Babylon in possession of the most abstruse fact,

that as a fraction of a carriage could not be driven along the streets, there was not the smallest occasion to have room for it, as had previously been done in almost every case. What made this case the more singular was, that it was a solitary one, there being no instance of fractions in any other part of the civic engineering:—one never heard of a bench which was made to hold two aldermen and a quarter, and yet that would have been every way as sane and sensible as the division of the streets.

This total want of science in those who are charged with the important function of mending the ways of the Babylonians, is not confined to those within the immediate sphere of domination of Gog and Magog. It is found in street, in lane, in road, and in all sorts of ways to the remotest suburb. What can be the reason? Plainly this: These ways are paid for by the public, under particular acts of Parliament; and those acts have, one and all, been sought for and obtained without the smallest reference or desire to promote the comfort of the people; but for the purposes and the profits of the parties by whom they have been sought and carried through the packed (and paid) committees at Saint Stephen's, which used to hallow and sanctify and promote all sorts of jobs,

before the House itself got ashamed of them and let a little day-light in upon their deeds, by which means they are wonderfully improved.

In all matters to which they have any reference, those local acts are the plague-spots of the country. An act, the object of which is to take any thing out of the general rule and practice of the common law, is, *prima facie*, an evil, or a proof that the general law is faulty, inasmuch as it does not meet the case under consideration. Now, it would be just about as sensible to frame a special penal statute to meet the case of an individual offender, as it is to frame those local acts in matters of civil economy — meaning thereby *extravagance*,—and regulation. What is the use of a general code of laws at all, if any particular knot of men are to have the power of coming to the legislature and obtaining a little snug counter-code of their own, which shall, in as far as they are concerned, annul the general statute? The immediate object in applying for all these little supplemental laws is the raising of money; a power which is too dangerous and liable to be abused for being safely intrusted to every local set of men, who can cabal and job, and who generally contrive to have the sums to be raised indefinite, and to smuggle in a clause which may afford them an indemnity.

There can be no question that one of the means

by which the obtaining of those acts *was formerly* facilitated, was the direct profit which the members of the committee to whom they were intrusted, made of them; and which *was* understood to be, in many instances, some compensation, at least, for the expense of an election, and the labour of attending to the public business of the nation. Another was, no doubt, the fees that had to be paid to the officers of the House; fees which had better, in all cases, be abolished, and their place supplied by more adequate salaries, if those that the parties already enjoy be not a full equivalent for all that they are worth.

The inhabitants of the parishes without the jurisdiction of the city, and some of them such as Pancras, Mary-le-bone, and Lambeth, are all fast bound in those local acts, which confine and squeeze them like *vices*, literally like *vices*, out of which they now bawl in vain to be delivered. And why should they? If men, in the too active pursuit of their private business or their pleasures, will allow their public rights to be taken from them, they deserve it:—if the gentlemen of Mary-le-bone, or any other parish, happened to be too big, or too busy, for attending to the nature and probable effects of those statutes, for paving, lighting, and watching, under which so enormous sums are raised, and from which there flow so many fat things in

the way of jobs, it is right that they should feel the consequences of their neglect. Those great parishes contain, for a part of the year at least, a majority, and for the whole year a considerable number, of those whose duty it is to watch over and protect the interests of the people of England in that very House whence those private bills, of which they complain so loudly, and in as far as the bills themselves and the intentions of the parties who procured them are concerned, so justly, originated. Many of them were members of parliament at the time; and if they were so, and did not watch over their own interests, how, in the name of wonder, can they be supposed to take care of those of others? Suppose a man were wilfully to shut his eyes, march straight to the horsepond, souse himself in over head and ears, and then run about yelping for commiseration with "Bless me, I am wet!" what emotion would he excite in the spectators? Would they run after him, pity him, and provide him with dry clothes? No, the chance is that they would laugh at him—if they did not, they would act unjustly. In ethics, there is not a sounder or more useful maxim, than that every man should have, unpitied, the full consequences of that folly or negligence which, by ordinary prudence and attention, he might have avoided; for without such a maxim the whole value of

wisdom and caution would be taken away. The poor and the ignorant, those who have not the means of averting, or the capacity of knowing, an evil, are to be pitied, and, if possible, relieved, when the consequences of that evil fall upon them. If the inhabitants of those parishes had been men who had neither the means of knowing, or the ability of opposing the acts, of the effects of which they now complain, they would have been objects of pity; but they would be very much offended if put in that class, and therefore that of which they complain is not only very fully merited on their part, but it is the severest rebuke which, as influential men, and especially as members of parliament, they could meet with. "If these things have been done in the green tree, what must we presume has been done in the dry?" If the leading men of the country, and among them the very men who have the power of saying "yes" or "no" upon these matters, have allowed their rights to be taken away and their pockets to be picked at the very threshold of their own doors, what are we to think of their vigilance in protecting either the rights of their (nominal) constituents in particular, or of their countrymen in general?

In as far as jobbing and mismanagement are concerned, truly "Wisdom crieth in the streets" of Babylon; and it is as true that "until she rapped

them pretty smartly over the fingers," no man regarded her voice; and one may say without much fear of contradiction, that, in the matter of parochial and district accommodations, more money has found its way to the pockets of hireling attorneys, and jobbing overseers and tradesmen, than would have paid for all the accommodations twice over. This has been the bane of England, the cause of much private misery, the cloke of very much corruption on the part of those who had the custody of certain portions at least of the public purse. Need we wonder that the roads are dusty in dry weather? No; for the acts in terms of which they are kept in order, were obtained by throwing dust in the eyes of the people. Need we wonder that they are dirty in wet weather? No; for the hands that have the care of them are never clean.

From this root which is planted in the Babylon, and which has there sent a fibre into every thing, be it what it may, in virtue of which a certain number of the people have obtained an *ex parte* law for enabling them to levy money upon the rest, there has grown up a loathsome tree which overshadows the whole land, and every where drips its baneful dew, which, congealing as it falls, nips and withers the prosperity (and which is worse, the morals) of the country. If it be plain to the

ordinary sense of mankind, that money which is taken out of their pockets by any means—by general statute, by particular statute, or by custom—if either unequally levied, or corruptly expended, their feeling of virtue will conspire with other feelings, to make them evade the payment by every means in their power. But the whole of the acts, authorizing those exactions which are not paid to the state but to private parties, for the furtherance of purposes which originated with those parties, and of which those parties have still the management, are jobs, as palpably as any thing can be. In the country, they were, most of them, bonuses conceded to the local members and their friends, as a sort of *solatium* for voting against their consciences, if they had any; or as a *succedaneum*, if they had not.

It is singular—or perhaps, from the equivoke of the name, it is not singular—that the *highwaymen* of England, who have the making and repairing of the public thoroughfares, should all be open to this charge of jobbing. In the neighbourhood of the Babylon it is allowed that the sums received by tolls are at least quadruple what, with skilful management, would be sufficient to keep the roads in repair; and yet nobody ever heard of the balance being accounted for to the public. The fact is, that the great thoroughfares, which are much more pub-

lic property than any thing else in the country, ought to be wholly under the control and management of the public; they should be kept in order by officers appointed by the Government, and the whole costs paid out of the public revenue. Were this the case, the work would be better done, and it would not cost nearly as much. Even in the worst days of the Government, so far as my inquiry and memory serve me, its work,—unless when a palpable job given as a sop to some hungry dog that was useful,—is always better done and costs less than that which is done by any agent, for any other party; and now that there is, on the part of the Government, some signs of a disposition not to allow of sops, there can be the less objection, that is, *pure* objection, to committing the whole management of the public thoroughfares — those which connect one assize, or market town with another — to them; knocking down all the turnpike-gates; and paying the whole expenses out of the general revenue of the country. As for roads of a more local description, those might be kept in repair by the hundred, the parish, the owner of the estate, or the occupier of the farm, as it might be.

That the work could be better and more cheaply done in this manner, must be taken for granted; but that, the mere work, though it be the only *visible* part of the matter, is far from the only one

in which a saving to the public would be effected. The whole of the toll collectors would be struck off; and assuming that there are only five thousand of them, at fifty pounds a year each, there would be a saving of a quarter of a million upon that item. Again, there is the profit of the toll contractors, which may very fairly be set down at another quarter of a million. These two items are plain enough, and they are considerable; but the heaviest of all are probably behind,—clerks, surveyors, and commissioners:—what they get cannot be very well known; but I should think a million and a half not too much; and if I be wrong, I should like to be put right by a full statement of the receipts and expenditure, without (what I fear would be impossible) any jobbing in the latter. Thus, were the public roads directly in the hands of Government, there might, and there *would*, be a saving of two millions a year, over and above what would accrue from the more honest and effective performance of the work, and that might, perhaps, amount to half a million, or even a million, more.

What are the objections to an arrangement that would effect so material a saving to the country? I can anticipate two: it would increase the influence of the Crown; and it would compel those who do not use the highways for horses and carriages, to pay for those who do. There is a third and far

more powerful objection: the destruction of the power, patronage, and profits of those who *work* the present system; but as that would not probably be pleaded, it does not need to be met.

First, then, the plan suggested would increase the influence of the Crown. Be it so. The influence of the Crown is not intrinsically worse than any other influence: it is worse only when worse; and by parity of reason, it must be better when better. There was a time when the barons, the very class of persons who manage the turnpikes and matters of that description now, united their influence with that of the Crown, in the matter of the army. What was the consequence? Continual squabbling, and the people of one county marching away to cut the throats of those of the next. Were these days of liberty and prosperity, and improvements in the arts? No; they were days of turbulence, anarchy, and oppression. The powerful barons had, no doubt, more freedom then, than they have now; they despised the law, and were free to commit crimes. If it has been found better to have one king than a thousand feudal lords; if it has been accounted more salutary to have one law given forth from Westminster, than to have a separate code in every shire; if it has been found more safe for the liberty and life of the subject to

have one supreme court of justice, than to have a dungeon and a gallows at the command of every squire; if it has been found better to have the navy under one direction, than to have each sea-port building and equipping its quota of vessels; if, in short, it has been found for the advantage of all men, for the giving of fair scope to honest exertion, and the putting down of tyranny—that small tyranny which acts and destroys every where —to bind the bundle of rods in every other great public matter: then why should the influence of the Crown be denied in that of the highways? The Crown has the management of the mail-coaches: are they less convenient, less rapid in their motions, or less safe, than those which are the property of individuals, and upon which the dreaded and destructive influence of the Crown does not fall? The fact is, that, for all general purposes, the influence of the Crown is the very best influence that can be resorted to, in matters of internal regulation: it has no occasion to job for its own purposes; and, in fact, it has never jobbed in these, unless through the medium of some such junto as those that have the control of the high-ways. In as far, therefore, as the objection of the influence of the Crown is concerned, it confirms that which it is intended to refute.

Is there more force in the objection that they who do not use the road would be made to pay for it? In whatever way the cost of the road may be levied in the first instance, it must, in the end, fall upon that which alone can pay for every thing, the capital and labour of the country, or, if the country be in a thriving state, the labour alone. This is the fund to which every expense and impost must come at last; and taxes are like travellers, the farther they have to go, they pick up the more dirt. No human ingenuity can lay on any tax, so that it shall permanently, or even at the time, fall exactly in the place and in the proportion in which it is actually borne, because the profits, both of persons, and of branches of industry, fluctuate. To say that a man who is unable to support himself, or who just supports himself, and no more,—or a branch of industry which just supports itself, or is a loss to those who carry it on,—can pay a tax, is the same as to say that nothing and something are of equal value. The place to lay the tax, therefore, is that at which it can be collected at the least expense; and surely nobody will contend that that is where it has to be collected in sixpences, as at a turnpike gate. Under any system, therefore, the impost, whether levied by the Government, or under a local act, is not paid either by those who do use, or those who

do not use, the thing on which it is laid; but by either, or both, or neither of them, according to circumstances.

But how stands the case at present? Do all who use the road pay for it, or do all who pay for it use it,—in any other way than as they have their part of the general burdens of the country, and of this among the rest? Pedestrians do not pay at the turnpike gates, and yet footpaths are made for their use out of the common funds that support the road. It may be said that, if they were to pay, labourers, who are presumed to have no money till they have worked for it, would not be able to attend their work. It would, I grant, be a hardship; and yet, in so far as labourers are concerned, there is a more severe and absurd turnpike,—that which is erected on the boundary of the parish, and at which a heavier toll is demanded than for the state-carriage of Gog at any turnpike gate in the kingdom. Both gates are, no doubt, bad enough, —the one that is closed till you pay a penny, as well as the one which is closed till those whom you have left proceed to take you back again at their expense, whenever you become useless. The first is, however, certainly not worse than that which stops goods on the high-way, or stops a man because he is on horseback or in a carriage. Communication—the fetching of what is wanted to

where it is wanted—is one of the most powerful stimuli of industry; and, therefore, any thing that tends to impede communication is a public injury.

Again, who pay in the first instance for the pavements of the Babylon? They who ride horses and drive carriages in them? No. — *No?* and why should there be one law in Oxford-street, and another in the road from Paddington to Islington? There are buildings upon each side of both, and foot pavements; and (I believe) the middle of both is *Macadamized*—paved in that style which was in common use in many parts of the island before the man after whom it was named, and who was paid for finding it out, was born. They have altered the system now; but if the same eleemosynary fit which was on them had continued, I should not have been astonished though a grant had been made to one man for finding out the moon; and another, by a solid number on the third row, with a vote of thanks *à la Sancho*, to "the man who invented sleep." But, to the antithesis of the ways within, and those without, the Babylon.

The former are made and kept in repair by a rate, and sometimes a very heavy one, imposed upon the householders of the ward or the parish; though, from the nature of their habits and avocations, they may not be in the street, even on foot, once in a week. There are no turnpike-gates

within the liberties of the city; and Barclay and Perkins's heaviest dray, which probably pulverises a ton of granite every time that it passes along, pays no more impost than the lightest lass that skips upon the *pavé*.

In places without the reach of the Babylonian fog, again, those who ride or drive along the road pay for all. They who occupy the land on either side, and who are not unfrequently the trustees or their tenants, may use the line from bar to bar, scot free; and there is a beautiful sort of chance which drops down the bars in a way that shall best accommodate the neighbourhood with almost the whole of the intermediate line.

In the suburbs of the city—the neutral grounds as it were—with regard to which people have not yet made up their minds whether they be town or country, and where, in consequence, the thoroughfares are called roads and not streets, they manage matters something in the same way that the lawyers deal with a property to which the titles of two contending parties are so nearly balanced that it is doubtful to which the property belongs—they take it from both; levy a road-rate upon the householders, and exact tolls from those that ride and drive.

Upon so grave a matter as this—a matter which costs so much, is (notwithstanding all the jobbing

and all the nonsense of its management,) of so much public utility, and which, perchance, maintains in affluence (and sometimes in impudence) so many who might otherwise be in the workhouse,—upon such a subject, I would not be guilty of the use of so vulgar an epithet as "a kettle of fish;" but really it is a system, or rather a confusion and contrariety of systems, for which one has great difficulty in finding an appropriate name. To the citizen it is *acid;* he cannot help looking *sour* at having to pay for that which is common to the whole world, and which, in reality, he uses less than any other of its inhabitants;—to the rustic it is *alkali;* he is *washed clean* of all payment whatever;—and, true to the law of chemical action, at the place where the two meet—the *neutral* ground, the two combine—the inhabitants have the burden of both, which may, very properly, be denominated a *salt.*

If the present system of management has produced these absurdities and contradictions, then it is pretty clear that, in principle, nothing can be worse than the present system; unless indeed it be, what very few will be disposed to deny—those who make a profit of it to the loss and detriment of the country,—the way in which that system is worked. The plan which I have suggested would have the advantage of uniformity. I have already shown

that it would have the advantage of economy; nobody would be insulted or hindered at the toll-bar; and the cost, like that of every other thing strictly public, would find its way immediately to those by whom, whatever may be the length or the intricacy of the channels through which it passes, it must, in all cases, ultimately be borne.

There is one other observation relative to the ways in the neighbourhood of the Babylon, that cannot be too often repeated: they are, though the most frequented, and the most costly, the very worst in the three kingdoms. They are all *made*, to be sure, in some way or other; most of them are made after the fashion of Macadam, and not a few of them under the immediate instruction of that person. But the evidence of every body knowing them—save, perhaps, a trustee, a clerk, a surveyor, or a gate-keeper—feels that they are very bad, inferior in all respects to roads over which the hundredth part of the persons and property is not conveyed, and which are, therefore, less essential to the interests of the public.

Those who ply the numerous coaches upon the great thoroughfares are pretty unanimous in their opinion, that the cost of the same vehicle, both in the wear of itself and horses, is a fourth more on the twenty miles next the Babylon, than on the average of the rest of the lines. There may be

some cause for this, or at least for a part of it, other than the badness of the roads. The coaches may be more heavily loaded, and drive faster. Both of these are, to some extent, the case. The "long stages," as they are called, are generally better appointed than the "short ones;" and therefore people prefer them even for short distances. On this account, they may be quite loaded in the vicinity of the metropolis, and comparatively empty on the remainder of the journey. Some of them also do drive faster; but to compensate that, they usually drive better horses.

The evidence of the case does not however wholly rest with the owners of those coaches, neither is the increase of the load and rate of going so great as the cost of which they complain. The roads are palpably more miry when the weather is wet, and more dusty when it is dry; and as these have not very much to do with the additional load and rate of driving, they must depend on something in the nature of the roads themselves.

These roads are not naturally very hilly, because the country is, taking it on the whole, rather a level one; but the system of the old engineers (probably to avoid the morasses which are said to have been abundant then) appears to have made them as hilly as the nature of the surface would allow; and the recent engineers have been marvellously perti-

nacious in their adherence to the old lines. Whether the latter circumstance is to be charged to their veneration for the wisdom of ages, or their incapacity to find out and remedy the defects of the lines, it is not of much consequence to inquire; the fact is certain, and the knowledge of the cause would not alone remove it. Some of these hills are, no doubt, abundantly steep; and, as if the mere steepness were not enough, they contrive generally to give the road both a twist and a transverse slope at the very worst part of it. They, as it were, lay a plan for the overturning of the carriage at the very point where, whether in ascending or in descending, the horses have the least power over it. It may be that these tentatory places are wisely put in: as, if horses and a vehicle get safely over them, there is no danger in the better parts of the road; whereas, if a road were all good, the danger of accidents would be diffused equally over the whole of it.

The ups and downs of the roads in the vicinity of the Babylon are not, however, the worst faults of them; and, indeed, the case has never been fairly settled by experiment, how far moderate acclivities and declivities are injurious to a highway. The variations in the absolute power required to move a load, are not the only elements in the calculation. The muscles of the horse are differently

acted upon; and thus, while a horizontal pull, or a pull upon the same uniform slope, would be one dull and unbroken labour, the varying pulls upon alternate ascents and descents may, within certain limits, be alternate labour and rest. The facts of the case could not be arrived at without a good deal of difficulty, because they would vary with the speed, the number of horses in the team, and many other things that would require repeated and very accurate experiments. But still it is singular, important as roads are in every country, and paramountly so as they are in this, that the very first inquiry toward the settlement of their comparative merits has not yet been made.

The expense of the Babylonians and those who supply them with provisions and goods, is so great in carriages and horses, that one who had not examined the facts would be apt to conclude, that, if there were any one subject upon which her wise men would, sooner than another, "bestow all the tediousness" of their philosophy, that subject would be public roads. They give themselves enough of trouble about other matters, and matters of comparatively very minor importance. If one snail happens to have a different style of architecture for his shell than another, they bestow months, reams of paper, and pounds of copper, (to say nothing of wits) upon that; and if the snow upon

some mountain far in the North happens to be red, they will sit down for moons, and work all their head-pieces to find out whether the colouring matter be an animal or a vegetable substance. Any of them may have seen red snow at home, and the cause of its redness in operation; but that would have been common-place. The philosophy of the road would have the vulgarity of being useful; and therefore they stick to that which has the excitement of novelty and the purity of philosophy, without any admixture of base utility.

If it be conceded that roads are the very first and most essential step in the improvement of a country, — a position that no man, who knows much about the subject, will deny; then it follows very evidently and obviously, that, if philosophy be the foundation of practical wisdom, the principles of roads ought to have been the very first subject to which the wise ones should have turned their attention.

Nor does the want of information which prevails so generally upon this, one of the most important of all subjects, militate only against the professed philosophers; for it involves a reproof to the whole influential part of society. More statutes for roads have been obtained than for any thing else. These have always been obtained by

bills founded upon petition; they have generally been "worked at" by committees; and there has been some cause shown for the necessity of them besides the mere wish of the parties: some of them, too, have been losing speculations, and that not for the want of tolls and traffic to bear a reasonable and even liberal expense, but because the cost of making had, through ignorance and jobbing on the part of the managers, been far more than it ought to have been; and the road itself, from ignorance on the part of the maker, had demanded so much for repairs, that the revenue was by that means eaten up.

One of the most striking proofs of this total ignorance was the noise made by the plan of Macadamization, which was not only not new, but not a *system* of road-making at all,—merely a means of applying one of the materials, and calculated to make the road ultimately either better or worse, according to other circumstances. And yet the people and the parliament of England made far more noise about Macadam, than ever they made about James Watt; so much so, that a stranger would have supposed that he had found out the philosopher's stone, instead of merely setting labourers to break stones, as they had been previously broken by others for the very same purpose.

I find no fault with Macadam; he did just what

any other man would have done under the same circumstances. He made the most of the condition in which society had placed him; and if he had not done so, he would have been to blame. The fault, perhaps it would be more charitable to call it the folly, lay in those who asserted the superiority, and inferred the universality of broken flints as an entire system of road-making. They treated it as ignorant people treat every panacea; they did not exactly know what it would do, and thence they most gravely and wisely concluded that it could do every thing. Street or road, deserted place or thoroughfare, it was only Macadamize it, and drive away in the cheapest and most easy manner. No matter what happened to be below; rock, sand, gravel, clay, the black fat mud of London, a quagmire, any thing; travellers had no occasion to heed any thing but the surface; the powdering of broken stone was applied to that, and all was right. But the mud which, when the pavement was in larger masses, came up only in the interstices, now came up in one continued mass, and came up always when the street was wet. Heavy rains used to wash and cleanse the old pavement, and, if any thing, render it more firm and compact; but rain always made the new one foul; and when the rain had been of some continuance, the street continued to vibrate like a quagmire, even after the drought had set in;

and the mud on the surface then filled the air with clouds of dust. More Macadamization only augmented the evil, as the mud and dust made their appearance the moment that the little stones seemed to be agglutinated into one mass. These evils were first noticed in the great thoroughfares in low situations; and it was found that if the plan were continued there, the Babylon would, at a greater expense of paving than any other city, be the most filthy, and the most incorrigibly filthy on the face of the earth. So, with the exception of some few streets in open and airy situations, and having a surface drainage, it was resolved to *un*-Macadamize the Babylon. But the wise men by whom this resolution (a resolution formed in the school of those who are proverbially not wise) was taken, contented themselves with a mere surface information. They had adopted the plan without rational knowledge that it would answer their purpose; and they discarded it without ascertaining whether the fault was in the small stones, taken in themselves, or in the improper preparation of the road for them. They paid the fee to the fool's teacher, but they came away without the lesson.

Now, even from the Babylonian experiment, which was, in most instances, as bungling in the execution as it was unscientific in the plan, one

thing was proved—that driving over such a surface was much more agreeable than driving over large stones. It was more dirty, however, and more expensive; and these evils were held to do more than counterbalance the good; so the wise men of the Babylon denounced the whole matter.

In this they acted by the same unreflecting impulse that led them to adopt it at first,—an impulse which is too often the only operating one when the funds, out of which the cost is paid, are not the property of the parties.

The broken stone is, in itself, altogether guiltless of the evils, on account of which it has been discarded. Be it flint, granite, greenstone, or any thing else to which mineralogists have or have not given a name, there is no volition in it to become dust, and get into the throat of an old woman. It has but one quality, and that is necessary and not voluntary; if you lay it upon mud or mire, it will sink down whenever that shall be softened by the action of rain; and it does so the more readily, just because, if it were placed on a proper foundation, it would make a better road than the foul gravel of which the unpaved ways of the Babylon used to be made. The gravel, being cheaper, was put on to so much greater a depth, that the whole substance of the road, as far as acted on by ordinary carriages, may be said to have been uniform. Al-

though, therefore, the surface of it got soft and wet, the wet did not penetrate to a softer stratum, convert that into mire, and bring it to the surface. But the broken stone, being laid in a thin stratum over matter of softer texture than itself, and presenting to that matter a series of angles or points, and not a level base, was placed in circumstances which rendered its sinking down inevitable. Nor can there be the smallest doubt that, if the substratum had been of a firmer consistency, and the water prevented from lodging in it, the streets of small stones at the surface would have been every way more eligible than those with large. There could not be more mud or dust from the abrasion of the stone itself; because a waggon-wheel, passing over a surface nearly level, has no more tendency to grind down, or even to break a small stone than a large one. No doubt the small stones were often of a worse quality than the large ones. They were flint, which, though it be grated down with difficulty, is one of the most brittle of stones; and therefore ought not to have been used at all. There are, certainly, two strong inducements to the use of it by the Babylonian road-makers: it is cheaper than any other stone, and it is more easily broken; and, as the projectors never said a word about the qualities of different kinds of stone—most probably they never thought about the sub-

ject—the contractor made use of that which best suited his own interest.

The same ignorance that rendered the broken-stone streets of the Babylon an abortive experiment, has affected all the public roads in the district, which have, generally speaking, become worse as they have been Macadamized, whether under the direction of Macadam or of any body else. Among those substances that are used as remedies in diseased states of the human body, there is not any thing that can be called a quack medicine,—the quackery consists in giving it to a patient to whose constitution and case it is not adapted. Just so with this matter of the roads: that application which, if they had been properly prepared for it, would have made them better, made them worse, just because they had not got the preparations.

One would imagine that common sense would have taught this to the parties; but in many men, and especially in men who, like road-trustees, take upon them the concerns of the public, common sense often gets very lazy and quiescent. Nothing, after the fact has come out, can be more plain and palpable than the necessary ruin of the Babylonian roads, by working into them the means of their own destruction. With the exception of one or two of the gravelly heights, over which it is not desirable that thoroughfares of great traffic should be car-

ried, the whole subsoil of the Babylonian valley is of a nature but ill-calculated to resist pressure when wet. Any unpaved lane affords a proof of this; for the wheels are, in wet weather, up to the very naves. One would be apt to think that this would have suggested drainage as the very first thing to be done, before a coating, so well calculated for sinking as that used on these roads, had been put on; but there are very few instances where that has been done at all, and none where it is perfect or upon scientific principles. But drainage alone would not be sufficient, as the subsoil contains a great deal of clay, and would need to be made drains altogether. Something is wanted that shall prevent the surface water from getting down to the subsoil, and the subsoil from getting up to the surface. That something must be a flooring of stones, or bricks, or some substitute; and until the approaches to the Babylon are properly drained and furnished with that, they will continue to be the most expensive, and at the same time the worst, in the island.

Gresham College is defunct as to the "liberal arts" that were to be taught in it; and a resurrection is neither very likely nor very desirable. The trustees and surveyors who are appointed in the districts, are never likely to be men who shall have the requisite zeal and talents for efficient

road-making. It would not, therefore, be amiss to change the Gresham into a school in which the science of improvement should be taught; and as the collision of the two colleges, the London and the King's, may be supposed to give some impulse to cogitation in the Babylon, it is surely not too much to hope, that some little good might be done by an arrangement of the kind; or if old Gresham would not work, they might couple with "the King's" a professor who should give lectures on the accommodation of the public, the existing faults of it, and the most likely means for their correction. If this were thought a matter either above or below the comprehension of the fathers of the city, they might be appeased by another professor of the accommodations of the table. Something should, at all events, be attempted; and there is this encouragement for the attempt, that matters could not be made worse than they are at present—the greatest consolation probably that the nature of such a case admits of.

If, in those ways of the Babylon that are open and visible to the public, and in which all the public have a personal and daily interest, there be that want of wisdom, and that proneness to corruption and mismanagement, that have been mentioned, what can be expected as to those ways that are hidden under ground? Into the way in which

these are managed, I shall not venture to look; for verily, as I am told, it is a dirty subject.

Still, as matters of mere curiosity, the subways of the Babylon are not the least singular things about it; and as people do not care for going to see them, they are worth a few words in passing. Taking them altogether, they have some resemblance to the vessels of circulation in the human body. The water conductors may be considered as the arteries, which, proceeding by mains from the reservoirs of the various water companies, propel the fluid, by minor ramifications, to all the parts and members of the Babylon; and the waste-pipes and sewers which return it back again, may be regarded as the veins. As is the case in the human body, too, the venous fluid is black and unfit for the purposes of life, as compared with the arterial. The health resulting from this circulation must, of course, depend very much upon the wholesome state of the arterial fluid; and as some of the absorbents which supply that are, from their situations, almost sure to take up a considerable portion of the black venous matter, before it has passed through the lungs of the earth and air, and been reoxigenized and deprived of its carbonaceous matter, the *system* may in the mean time be considered as in a state of considerable inflammation. The gas

pipes are almost as puzzling as the nerves are to the physiologists; but as, though they contain light, they contain none of the elements of life, they may be passed over in silence.

In their present state, the arteries contain living creatures like those that are found in blood,—only the animalculæ of the Babylonian circulation bear, in their size, nearly the same proportion to those in the blood, that the place itself bears to the animal whose blood is examined: the latter being quite inscrutable by the naked eye, and discernible only by microscopes of considerable magnifying power, while the former often rival an ordinary-sized shrimp. The quantity of these animalculæ is said to be, at some seasons of the year, so great as to be of some value in the manufacture of soup; and when it is not absolutely converted to this purpose, the natives of the Babylon can boast of having all their victuals served up with "shrimp sauce,"—a luxury which, so far as I know, is enjoyed by no other people on the face of the earth.

The venous system is still more thickly peopled, and—though it be by no means improbable that the arterial shrimps are taken up by the absorbents formerly mentioned—by living things of more ample size and energetic nature. Whether it be that the rats have become ashamed of their biped

namesakes, and thus have abandoned holes open to the day or the dusk, I do not know, but certain it is that the number of them in the Babylonian sewers is very great—probably greater than the total number of bipeds in the Babylon. So useful are they too, that our senators would be much more rationally employed in framing a statute "for the further protection and encouragement of rats in the subways of the Babylon," than they have been in throwing their super-Ajacian shield over those other rats, not so named in the statute, that have done far more harm, and far less good, than their subterranean namesakes.

Throughout all nature it is a general law that creatures are irritable and tyrannical over that which they can master, in proportion as they are weak; and therefore that the vermin of mankind should find their pleasure and amusement in destroying the other vermin, or in seeing them destroy one another—(as when hares are let out of a trap to be coursed, pigeons to be shot, or rats to be worried)—is just what we might expect; but still, neither the pleasure of human vermin, nor the mixture of merriment with much warmer matter, which the mention of the word "rat" would occasion in either House of Parliament, should deter the members of those Houses from the performance of their duty.

The subject is not one upon which much can be said, but it is one upon which much may be imagined from a hint. Well then, if it were not for the myriads of large brown rats that are in the sewers of the Babylon, the Thames would be poison, and the sludge of its banks death; and every grating, or other aperture, by which a sewer opened to the street, would scatter pestilence around it; and not only would it be fatal to life, but it would corrode the windows and walls of the houses, and spoil all their contents. Let any one who has got a little leisure and a little chemistry take the number of animals (upon all quotas of legs) that are in the Babylon, and consider the manner in which they live; then let him calculate the quantity of ammoniacal, and nitrous, and sulphurous, and the Lord knows how many compound gases, all of a highly poisonous and corrosive nature, and in their combinations having specific gravities adapted to all heights of the atmosphere, and depths of digging into the earth; and he will find that there would be quite enough to make the air of the Babylon, not a *malaria* merely, but an absolute *simoom*.

Of the elements of all those pestilent gases, the greater part are devoured by the rats, in their recent state, and before the chemical action from which the pestilence would result takes place; and

thus the said rats probably do more to preserve the health of the Babylonians, than the whole faculty taken *en masse*. This, to be sure, is not saying much; for the preservation of health is not the object of the faculty, inasmuch as, if there were no disease, there would be no doctors. Their object is, commonly speaking, to preserve the lives of the diseased; and, so that the life can be kept in, the more diseased the patient is, the better. In surgery the faculty are far more valuable than the rats.

It might be supposed that the number of dead rats would produce the same effect as that matter which they destroy, that it would be a mere transfer of the corruption, and, according to our common associations, a transfer from bad to worse. But that is not the case: those animals that live upon poisons, turn them into healthful substances. We (I mean *they*, for *I* have no pretensions to chemistry,) cannot look into the alembics and the crucibles of nature; nor can we see how she tempers materials that are not only, to our perception, dead, but deadly, and out of the compound elicits the principle of life. All that we can do is, to hold up our hands in silent wonder and speechless adoration of HIM who spake but the little word "BE," and all this was—ay, who without material, or instrument, or effort, according to our notions and perceptions, produced the whole. But as, in

our humble imitations, the most brilliant hues that we can produce, are produced by means of acrid and poisonous substances, who knows but that all the glories that gild the animal and the vegetable tribes, may be elaborated from the same?

In the case of the Babylonian rats, however, there is a much more simple solution; the one part of them eats the other, and thus they not only keep up the proportion between the numbers of their population and the means of subsistence, but are saved in all the expenses of funerals and monuments.

Still they are an organized race, and can combine together for the purposes both of attack and defence; as the nightmen who clean the sewers and cesspools of the Babylon often find. The travels of a nightman have never been published; but they would make a very curious book. As they worm their way along those dismal passages, they often find an army of rats drawn up to oppose their farther progress; and when they have the hardihood to attempt to rout the myriad, they often pay dear for their temerity; then there is such shouting, and swearing, and squeaking, that no combat of Indians could be accompanied with more discordant din. If the men can fell the rats as fast as they come on, then they may maintain their ground; but if the numbers of the foe be

great, the labour of the fight is excessive, the groans of the wounded bring fresh levies, and the most dismal deaths—that of being eaten alive by hundreds, being gnawed at every inch, at the same time unheard. Verily the subways of the Babylon are a singular subject.

CHAPTER VI.

BABYLONIAN INIQUITIES. α.

"Our wealth is often a snare to ourselves, and *always* a temptation to others." LACON.

ALTHOUGH many of the matters hinted at in other parts of these volumes have strong claims to the title of this chapter, and although the "eyes polite" may turn away from a page on which that title stands rubric; yet justice demands that the chapter should be written. If, indeed, one were to take one's moral estimate of the Babylon from what she says and writes, and reads, and re-echoes of herself, one would fairly and literally set her down as the "mother of abominations," the nursery and hot-bed of every crime that can be committed, and the fomenter of every fire in the human breast that can burn to the destruction of man or the demolition of his property.

The matin song of the public,—the 'lessons' by which men are prepared for the intercourse of the

day, are the crimes and follies which are disclosed at the police offices; and the conduct of criminals, trials, desperation, and death, with fresh crime springing up in the court of justice, and under the shadow of the gallows, form a large portion of the daily reading of many, and the whole of that of not a few. The preparation for the exchange, the counting-house, the senate, the club, the "hell," and even the church, is the interminable page of the Newgate calendar, broadening, deepening, and (they say) blackening as it extends, and, rapid as is the march of bricks and mortar and man and mind, outrunning (they say) them all, and threatening to eclipse and conceal all the other peculiarities of the Babylon, and be itself the type and the history of that mighty city.

Familiarity is, however, so far from being knowledge, that those things with which men are the most familiar, are very often the ones of which they know and desire to know the least. All men, from the first existence of the race, had been breathing atmospheric air from the very moment of their birth, and yet it was not till within these few years that they ever thought of analysing it, to find out whether it was a simple substance or a compound one, what change it underwent in the operation of breathing, or what were its specific uses in the animal economy. Possibly it may be so

with Babylonian crime; and they who complain of its increase may be mistaken, or if not, they themselves may be the causes.

In the minds of the people, and also in their modes of life, there certainly have been great improvements, and those improvements were never in more vigorous progress than they are at the moment at which I write. There has been legislation, too, till one cannot count the statutes, and need not attempt to understand them; the number of churches in the out-parishes has been more than quadrupled, and those who teach in them are all zealous and unceasing in their "wrestlings with the evil one;" societies have been instituted for the suppression of certain crimes—in persons whose reputed incomes are below the amount which is accounted a licence;—there are watchmen on foot and on horseback, with eyes like Argus, and ears like Rumour,—the former being closable by the wand, and the latter as open to falsehood as to truth; there are spies and informers who, for "the fine and their expenses," drag the Babylon as men drag a fish-pond; there are magistrates, paid and unpaid, who can discover by intuition, and commit by a look; there are sessions and swearings, and Old Bailey counsel and condemnations; there are the gaol, the tread-mill, and the gallows; and the wide plains of Australia still yawn for population.

There are all these things; and they are all, as we are told, borne post-haste toward perfection; and yet, turn where we will, listen to whom we may, in private house, or in public hall, from the pulpit or from the stage, in the senate or the sessions-house, we hear but one sound,—the mournful note of the cuckoo, that has come upon the Babylon in the spring-time of her improvement, the May-day of her morality and devotion, is, "the lamentable, the excessive, the unprecedented increase of crime."

Should this be the case, should the hearts of men actually be becoming more wicked, should life and property be getting less and less safe every day, of what avail is all the glory that we have bought, and all the greatness that we have built up? And if men not only go on in iniquity, but go deeper in it, of what avail is the increase of teaching and preaching, and legislating and punishing? If they only make us more wicked, we had as well—indeed we had better—shut up the school and the church, fling away the statute-book and burn the gallows, and revert back to barbarity, ignorance, and—virtue.

If there be not some mistake or misunderstanding in this case, then good is evil, and evil is good; and we preach, and teach, and discipline, and punish men, not into virtue but into guilt. If there be an absolute increase of crime, and not a

mere increase of the knowledge of it—and that is the doctrine on which the cry proceeds—there must be an increase in the cause of crime; and as that has taken place, apparently, not merely in spite, but in consequence of the efforts that have been made to repress it, there arises a strong presumption that the real causes of crime are not known; and that, for that reason, the means that are taken to prevent it, cannot be successful.

But, if there be any thing that tends to produce an increase, that must be in the institutions and regulations of society, and not in society essentially,—at least not in the greater quantity of intelligence that is diffused and diffusing over society. For if that were the fact, then the moons and stars of society—those eminent, elevated and luminous persons who have all along drudged and fagged at counselling, commanding, and coercing the rest—would, by necessary inference, be the greatest villains in it, and an archbishop or a premier would be tenfold more criminal and deserving of punishment than the poor illiterate inhabitant of the streets, who filches a pair of old shoes from a stall, or a bit of bacon from a chandler's shop. For, if it be not their greater stock of information that enables these persons to school and drill others for their spiritual and temporal "best," what can it be? They have not more or better limbs than

other people; and as for wealth, though the acquisition of it, by honest industry, may be an evidence of capacity for management, the mere possession of it is not; and the gold has just as much power and chance of conferring legislative faculties upon the box in which it is locked up, as upon the man who carries the key.

But if the cause be not in the improvements of society, without a contradiction in terms and a libel upon those who confer upon society its chief beauty and worth, so neither can we lay it at the door of external nature,—say that it is owing to any change in the mechanical or chemical properties of matter. There was a time when the difficulty would have been got rid of by laying the blame on the Devil, but that resource is now nearly cut off by the increase of churches on the one hand, and of information on the other; and therefore we are thrown upon one resource,—the institutions of society; and if crime has really increased, it has done so because, while society itself has been advancing, these have moved more slowly, stood still, or fallen behind.

As the very wise and able persons who manufacture and vend the laws, have, of themselves, come to this conclusion respecting their own handiwork and wares; as even Mr. Peel, after "working at" the criminal code, has taken up the lamenta-

tion of an increase, and as these admissions are of a humiliating and penitentiary nature, and therefore not such as men would voluntarily have recourse to in order to serve a purpose, they are entitled to very serious consideration.

Now, whoever looks attentively and for some time at the Babylon, cannot help seeing sundry reasons why crime there should be less as against the person, and greater as against property, than in places of more limited population and wealth.

Crimes against the person may be described as crimes of passion, and crimes against property as crimes of temptation; and the two causes that could produce an increase of either, are, an increased desire to commit, and a diminished chance of detection. In neither of these ways is there any thing that should make crimes of passion more abundant in the Babylon than in any other place; but rather the reverse. The ignorance and indifference which the Babylonians have as to each other diminish those animosities and bickerings, which, in less crowded places, lead to revenge and cruelty; and the mere fact that the person can cry out when in danger, makes it safer in a crowd than in comparative solitude. Whoever compares the calendar at the metropolitan assizes with the provincial ones, will find that crimes of cruelty are far more frequent in the latter; and that, of the crimes of ap-

parent cruelty that are perpetrated, many spring not from revenge but from despair. Some person of strong feelings and weak mind drops off the wheel, the wheel trundles away, and the very rapidity of its motion renders re-ascent impossible; therefore violent hands are, in the anguish of the moment, laid upon those that are dear—just because the idea of their living in misery or perishing of want, is far more agonizing and insupportable. A Babylonian felon seldom commits murder, but in cases where the law itself is not wholly blameless. It visits the minor offence with the same punishment as the major—estimates the life of the murdered man at the same amount as the penny which is forcibly taken out of his pocket; and therefore, as the perpetration of the major often appears to be a very likely means of concealing the minor, the in-equity of the law operates as a bounty upon murder,—says as plainly as a statute can speak, "If you will break into a man's house in the night, or attempt his purse forcibly on the highway, murder him if he makes any resistance—it will be all the same, if you are found out; and if not, the balance will be in your favour—dead men tell no tales."

The anger which, generally speaking, can agitate the Babylon, is the anger of nations; and the

utter disregard with which the wrath of an individual would be treated, induces individuals to keep their wrath to themselves. Possibly because the law shows so much more regard to property than to personal liberty or to life, there is, in John Bull, a greater abhorrence of assaults upon the person (when not done in the way of business or betting) than there is in the inhabitant of any other country; and this, combined with the absence of stimuli to the passions, tends to diminish the personal dangers to which even a stranger is exposed in the Babylonian streets. Even at the latest and loneliest hours, one who has the use of his limbs and his senses, and no ostentation of ill-guarded property about him, to allure cupidity to knock him down in the hope of obtaining that, one is more secure from personal attack in the metropolis than in the most remote village, and certainly more so than in any third-rate manufacturing or seaport town.

Notwithstanding the dismal stories of "holes in the wall," "pitfalls in the pavement," and all the horrible things which appear so formidable in ancient story, and of which the echoes have not yet entirely ceased, if I were to form my theory from my own observation, I should be very apt to say that a man cannot come by personal violence in the streets of the Babylon, unless he, in some way

or other, brings it upon himself. In making that "examination for myself," which first induced me to inflict these volumes upon the public, I was in all streets at all hours, an entire stranger, and with no more knowledge of the characters of the neighbourhoods, than what I could gather from their external appearance; and yet I never met with a threatening act, or an uncivil word, neither did I ever see one, who conducted himself in a proper manner, meet with either. Probably the alleged indifference of the guardians of the night to crimes of another description, may tend to lessen the number of wanton and malicious brawls in the streets. The persons who engage in these—unless when they are instigated as a cover for robbery, and then the instigators take care not to appear as principals—are generally heroes under the inspiration of nocturnal valour,—the persons who will compound with the watch when they cool, or who can pay when they come before his Worship in the morning.

Still this good may be accompanied by a certain admixture of evil. The same current which makes the crowd race by the angry, must make them turn a deaf ear to the wounded in spirit. The desolation and misery that can find no relief and no sympathy, may harden into crime; and the passion that can find no pride in showing itself, may, like

the sword of the hero before he went forth upon his exploits,

> " Eat into itself, for lack
> Of somebody to hew and hack ;"

or, like the sting of the scorpion when he cannot escape from the fire that surrounds him, it may be changed from a weapon of defence to an instrument of death. Destitution, in the midst of unbounded wealth ; desolation, where every street is a crowd ; the world around, and yet comfort from no lip, and pity from no eye ; and the wound, by whatever inflicted, all the while working within, and rankling unheeded and unknown : these, singly or together, may be the cause of many of those droppings down from rectitude, or dashes out of life, that blacken the page of Babylonian story ; and thus the desperation, the death, and especially the mental agony, may not be less, than if man strove with man, and the turbulence of passion fermented and bubbled over in the streets.

But while the circumstances of the Babylon probably tend to lessen the number of crimes of passion, they certainly tend to increase those of temptation ; for these three principal reasons, which branch out into a number of minor ones :—there is more property to steal, less knowledge of character, and greater facilities for disposing of stolen goods. A great city is the only place where theft can be

carried on as a steady, regular, and profitable trade. In the country, a thief may steal occasionally; but he must have some other apparent means of life, otherwise he would be put out of society: in London, he may be a thief, and nothing but a thief; and yet, if he be but sufficiently expert at his trade, he may, in his hours of relaxation, enter genteel company, and support the character of a gentleman. In the country, a gang of desperate burglars or murderers may occasionally be formed; and the more lonely, wild, and inaccessible the place is, perhaps it is all the better for the formation of such a gang; but their trade produces so very little profit, and is so laborious and so dangerous, that he who stakes his existence upon it, must be fool as well as rogue, and suffer the constant pains of fatigue, and cold, and hunger, in addition to the constant bodings of transportation and the gallows, which must fall much more heavily upon him in his solitary den, than they do upon the London felon, when he carouses in safety at the *professional* rendezvous, or comes into the world as a gentleman. The improvements of the country, too, the finer roads, the general establishment of coaches, which from the rapidity of their motions it is difficult to come up with, and from the numbers that they carry dangerous to attack, have greatly lessened the number of highway robberies by stealth, and

pretty nearly abolished those of violence; and probably there is seldom a coach robbery of any extent, the plan of which is not laid in the Babylon, and the coach itself carries down the principal or the accomplice, whose real character is not so much as suspected, till the stolen property be in the hands of a London receiver, and possibly the restoration of it under treaty, through the medium of an officer of (what is called) justice.

From this change of circumstances, the tide of human beings which is constantly rolling from all parts towards the Babylon, does not roll pure. Many come there from honest ambition, some from idle curiosity, others from a mere love of wandering; and not a few to turn to account those vicious propensities for which there are no scope and shelter in the hamlet where the owner has been known from his boyhood;—and as the temptations and faculties for thieving increase with the increase of population and wealth, the allurements of London become fully as great to the thief as to the man of honourable intentions; and just as commerce, money-making in trade or profession, is the characteristic virtue of the Babylon, so theft "in all its branches," money-making in another way, becomes the characteristic vice:—the end, and probably the primary desire, are the same, but the means are different,—and whatever may be the

ultimate consequences, that which comes according to bargain, comes honestly.

Were it not that it might seem a little invidious, it would be a curious, and by no means an unprofitable inquiry, to examine the whole scale of this vast instrument of money-making, from that high degree of merit, activity, and success, which wins a peerage, down by the zero where conduct is neither honesty nor theft, to the extreme depth that deserves the gallows. Could this be done, from the man who rises up at the foot of the throne, to him who hangs down from the top of the gibbet; and could the causes which at each degree tend to alter a man's position on the scale—send him upward or downward—be stated, pointing out which of them proceed intrinsically and inherently from himself, and which are imposed upon him by external circumstances, over which he has no control, or of which he is unable to see the bearing and tendency at the time,—we should make more progress in the knowledge, and therefore in the prevention of crime, than if we examined all the officers and wigged men in the nation, and restored the good old times of ignorance and blessedness, when every great man in the nation could set up a gallows on his own baronial dunghill, or levy war upon him of the next castle, and thus prevent the increase of crime, by weeding the

population at home, or mowing them down wholesale on the common.

I fear, however, the thing is impossible. There are no facts; and before opinions could be built to half the necessary height, they would jostle against each other, and down would come the whole fabric. The politician, who beggars half the nations of Europe, and butchers the tithe of their most active inhabitants—it may be for the purpose of a little permutation, changing lords into butlers, and butlers into lords, is of "glorious and immortal memory," and we curse him in marble. The agent whom he employs is most gallant, and we do him in brass. Him, who, "by lying words," makes us pay for the glory, we neither cut nor cast; but he takes care of the money, and while we give the others "empty praise," he buys "solid pudding," gobbles it up, and laughs in his sleeve at us. Descending through the whole succession, and it is as long as the links of society, we continue our praise so long as the parties cheat us out of our understanding as well as our property; but, when we are cheated of the latter only, the case is altered; we come into the crime end of the scale, and we punish in the small, what we praised to the skies in the great. Perhaps we are quite right in all that; but as we have no way of showing it but

"*Magister dixit*," it is possible that we may be a little wrong. Taking therefore the present theory and the present definitions, it will be more useful to point out a few of the sources which pour out upon the Babylon its characteristic iniquities, and then a few of the courses and channels in which the streams, thus poured out, flow. These are, it is true, only modes of the three great reasons already mentioned (wealth, ignorance of character, and facility in getting rid of what is stolen); but these are so vague and general, that they cannot well be understood without an allusion to some of the particulars.

One of the most general and fertile sources of crime, and manufactories of criminals, is what may be termed *domestic*—that which is carried on with various shades of indifference and ignorance on the part of the sufferers, but all criminal, and tending to corrupt the great mass of the Babylonian population.

Of the vast accumulation of wealth, tangible by thieves, that is in London, in household goods, appointments, ornaments, necessaries, luxuries, the stocks in trade of merchants, warehousemen, and tradesmen, and the cash of not a few, the greater part must, from the habits of society, be intrusted to servants, not in the keeping or the domestic use merely, but in the purchase, the sale, and every transaction connected with it. This is unavoid-

able; and were there no temptations from without, did the master set no bad example to the servant, and were the character and connexions of the servant perfectly known, there could be no harm in it. Sterling honesty has so little necessary connexion with rank or riches, that, if society were fairly polled, it is by no means improbable that the majority of the "good votes" would be below the middle point of society.

The virtue of honesty is, however, a virtue of cultivation, a law of society, and not of human nature in its original or rude state. The solitary savage, and the infant just begun to use its hands, snatch at every thing that strikes their fancy without any regard to *meum* and *tuum*. Being a cultivated plant, the weeds will choke it, if the culture be neglected. Those who wish to have any good quality, perfect and constant, in those in whom they confide, cannot fail in being disappointed if they divest themselves of that quality, or show that they are careless of it. The votary of indolence and voluptuousness, who never inquires into or seems to care about his affairs, has no rational ground on which to hope for carefulness in those in whom he confides. He who is irregular in his payments, has no good reason to look for any thing but irregularity from every one about him. The squanderer, who is known to give large sums to the

most worthless characters for the most worthless services, furnishes his servants with a good plea, in moral equity, for plundering him whenever they can: As, if a "a person of quality" pays a hundred guineas for a bravura, who shall convince John the butler that he is not entitled to at least an equal sum for serving him in Burgundy for a month? And if John does not get it by contract with his master, there is every chance that he will do so by collusion with the wine-merchant. Commands or orders, to be obeyed without constant watching and compulsion, must be equitable; and though it would not, perhaps, be possible to fix a tariff of the values of those things upon which the fashionable are pleased to squander their money, yet if it be a man's pleasure and practice voluntarily to cheat himself out of ten times the worth of one part of his gratifications, he holds out both a temptation and an example to his domestics to cheat him out of about double the value of whatever it may be their province to provide.

To this cause, more than to all other causes taken together, are owing the pecuniary difficulties which beset so many of the "mighty men" of the Babylon. They, in the vanity or the intoxication, or whatever else it is, of the moment, open certain sluices of extravagance; their domestics follow the example, and the whole house runs

to waste, not only till the cistern, which, husbanded, would have afforded a perennial supply and a constant surplus, be empty; but till the remnant of Jacob, who are in this respect "drawers of water," (though costly ones) shake their beards and refuse to give any more.

The supply of the several parts of expenditure is by the "person of quality" committed to the upper servant who has the charge of them,—as, the cook supplies the table, the butler the wines, the footman the wearing apparel, the groom the horses, the coachman the carriages, and so on; and where there is a major-domo, or steward, he audits the bills, and they are paid—at as long dates as possible, lest any of the family should by accident (which with very fashionable people is not very likely) detect an error in any of the items, or be startled at any of the charges. By each of these "masters of departments" the party is cheated doubly. First, a surcharge of from ten to fifteen or twenty per cent. according to the influence that the servant has over his master, is made on the amount of each article; and secondly, many more articles than are wanted are ordered. Of these some are wasted, some given away to the relations of the servants, or those who cater for their vices when they have holidays, and some are sold without being used,—perhaps resold without ever leav-

ing the shop, the *prime* cost divided, and the article replaced on the shelf to wait a fresh order. The sums that are obtained in this way are very great —not less than one-fourth of the total necessary expenditure in *any fashionable* case, and two or three times that in *very fashionable* ones. Of the surcharges that are made on the bills, the steward gets his tithe; and if the "out-goings" from the mansion, and the fêtes in it be numerous, the under servants have their pickings, and are trained up to continue the "good work," when the reward of their *fidelity* shall be upper places in that or any other family.

It was the curse of the "profligate son" of the Patriarch, that he should be "a servant of servants;" and a similar curse falls upon very many of the high and the noble of England—more especially when they reside in the Babylon, and plunge into the vortex of its dissipation. That there are exceptions, and glorious exceptions, I do not mean to deny. There are among the nobles of England many, of whom, in any other age or country, one would be delighted to make kings, not only on account of their talents, and the majesty of their manner, but of their system of government, and the love and loyalty of their subjects. In these cases, nothing can be more delightful than the baronial hall, or the town mansion; and if their heedless brethren could but taste what these en-

joy, they would come out of the wild turmoil of folly, and be, what they ought to be, the blessing of society, instead of its bane—the admiration of their countrymen, in place of the derision—the patrons of merit, and not the prey of worthlesness.

This is what may be considered as the domestic fountain of crime in the fashionable world of the Babylon. That it is without criminal intention on the part of the fashionables themselves, the primary and therefore the real authors of it, I am willing to admit; but the heaviest part of the curse was laid upon the son of Nebat, because "he caused others to sin;" and this part they must bear to its full weight. I grant that their emancipation would be no easy matter. The fetters of the servants to flatter, and the tradesmen *en masse* to dun, are wound about them with the closeness and the force of a boa-constrictor. A *very fashionable* man dares no more change his tailor, than he dares appear at court without a coat. If he should, the clothes are burnt with acid, so that they fall instantly to pieces, or they are "such a horrible fit," that other servants, who are in the plot, point and titter at the wearer, wherever he goes; and if the change be in any thing else, there are the same means both of destruction and ridicule. Thus, the cause of vice, which is at first involuntary, becomes in the end

necessary; and while we execrate the system, we cannot help pitying the sufferer.

The number of persons whose principles of honesty are thus destroyed is very great. They comprise the whole of the servants, the tradesmen and their servants, and all with whom these have any connexion or intercourse; and the evil to society is much greater, in consequence of custom sanctioning, and numbers countenancing the fraud.

If the offence could be brought within the list of capital felonies; if one or two of the fashionables would look into the matter; and if the Old Bailey were but once festooned with powdered lacqueys and "respectable" tradespeople; the remainder would be more careful for a long time.

The sums which servants amass in this way, "make their fortunes" in different ways, according to the difference of their disporition. If love of money be their bias, they save; and when they are tired of service, or service is tired of them, they usually set up inns and alehouses, which are not unfrequently "academies for gentlemen's gentlemen," and kept by "teachers of great experience." If, on the other hand, their bias be toward extravagance, they indulge in all manner of sensuality; gamble, get turned out of their places, and sink down step by step till they become regular and habitual thieves. Such is the stream of crime and

criminals that is poured from on high upon the Babylon.

There is peculation and plunder of a lower cast, among those domestics who have not the aristocratic pride of those in high life, who cannot make their bargain of purchase with the tradespeople, but must be content with a bargain of sale with the venders of small wares and the purchasers or removers of refuse. The dustman, the sweep, the old-clothes man, the skin-woman, and all the vermin that yelp about the streets to the annoyance of every one that has the faculty of hearing, every nose that can smell, and every eye that can see, are the patrons of the abigails in the houses of those persons who themselves give their orders, weigh what they receive, and pay their bills.

In behalf of this class, there are some pleas. They are generally very hard worked, often not very well treated, and, as many of them are solitary and unheeded, they have a tendency to get vicious from the mere want of enjoyment. These, from their youth, and their want of experience, lie open to many temptations. The old hag who comes to lift up the curtain of futurity, and show the blissful "wedlock and beautiful babes,"—things precious to the imaginations of blooming las[illegible] any rank — that are behind, can[illegible] the way to a little remuneration [illegible]

"the good lady of the house," and add a little more, unseen by the confiding and delighted abigail. The swain, too, who comes true to the prophecy, is well trained in love and in burglary, and steals the heart of the servant to-night, in order that he may steal the property of the master, when the seasonable period comes. Others again of these wandering betrayers come to the point by degrees, and gradually smoothing the way, make a thief of the poor girl before she is aware; and when her eyes are opened to her guilt, she has no alternative but suicide, or the company of the abandoned. There are other cases again, in which, by forged characters and concocted references, the ready-made confederates of thieves and burglars, those who need no enticement and no instruction, get introduced, not only into one family, but into numbers of families, live long in them under the guise of sobriety and sanctity, and plunder them all in succession. These, however, unless it be in the seduction of their fellow-servants, belong to the class of made thieves, and not to the sources whence thieves come.

A second source of Babylonian criminals and crimes is that which may be termed *professional*. [redacted] these a considerable number are found in the [redacted] tradesmen who collude with the me[redacted]ionables; as it may confidently be

laid down as a maxim, that no person who is habitually a party to a fraud, however cautiously, or in however business-like a manner, that fraud may be conducted, can be honest.

But besides those who are partners in cheating those customers who are bound to the copartnercy, there are in all trades others who carry on the war against the public generally, and cheat and plunder every one with whom they can come in contact. These are of all trades and professions, and scattered over every part of the Babylon. Those advertising shopkeepers, who actually do sell some things under their value, who pay as much for their shops and live in as expensive style as the regular dealers, and pay what would make a pretty fair profit upon all the business that they do, and do all this, not for "the blossom of a day," and then vanish, but continue in the same place, live and thrive, and in due time retire to enjoy their fortunes,—must do one of two things: they must either purchase goods that have been improperly come by, or fraudulently parted with; or they must by lying, changing goods after they are purchased, or some other mode of cheating, contrive to sell as many goods for as much more than their real value, as shall pay for the ing, and the loss upon those that They may do both of thes

them in every way in which they can be done; and some, or all, they must do.

Now if the "establishment" at which this is carried on be large—and I have been informed, that if they be not upon a large scale they do not answer—they must have assistants, and assistants numerous in proportion to the throng which the puffing and the lures that are thrown out draw toward the den. Of these assistants, some must be in their confidence, as respects the whole matter; and all must be initiated in the retail frauds by which the individual customers are abused. Thus the principle of virtue is destroyed; and all that is wanting to make the party a practitioner in guilt, is opportunity. The master villain may watch them; but even if he should detect them in small thefts, he hardly complains, lest they should detect him in his large ones. For this reason, he is said to be more anxious to make friends with any one in whom he discovers a peculiar aptitude for thieving. He praises his honesty and steadiness, and, after the practice of a number of arts, succeeds in getting him introduced into a regular house, doing business on a large scale and sending out goods to numerous retail customers. For some [redacted] new assistant is the most zealous and the [redacted] in the concern; and all his arts are [redacted] ratiate himself with the heads

of the establishment, or with those of the chief departments of it, until he shall have established that which, in the truly Babylonian tongue, is denominated "an *undeniable* character." Then begins the system of plunder, the former master acting as accomplice, or receiver; and many thousands are often stolen in this way, before the gallows peep through the blanket of the Babylonian fog, and cry "Hold! hold!"—and even if he should escape that, he in course of time falls into other dissipation, comes upon the town, and is a thief for life.

There are various other trades and professions, openly carried on in the Babylon, that initiate a vast number of young people in crime; and turn many of them over upon society as thieves. It is needless to say that those who assist regular receivers of stolen goods, traffickers in fraudulent bills, and all other matters that are (all but avowedly) in open defiance of the law, must be dishonest; and that the young people who assist those who practise rapine and extortion, must acquire a strong bias toward dishonesty. There is, however, one manufactory of guilt, the produce of which comes so frequently before the public, that some notice of it becomes necessary. The ordinary business of [redacted] Stock Exchange, as hinted at in a form[redacted] and as better known to all who go a[redacted] is dishonesty. When made i[redacted]

which it can be made, their gain is not the gain of industry, but of gambling; and every fetch, wile, quibble, and cheat, is resorted to in order to secure the possession and swell the amount of that unholy gain. The practice is not only justified, but applauded and exulted over; and as young people, who look more at the natural justice or injustice which they feel, than at the technical safety or danger about which they have not begun to speculate, they do not see that marked and mighty difference between cheating a man out of his property by telling him a lie to his face, and falsely writing his name, which is so well understood by those whom experience has endowed with much more lively perceptions of the gallows. Out of this practice arises a whole host of forgers; many of them doing this, at the commencement, for the use of the money in gambling, and with the intention of restoring it again when the profit comes. But if there be profit for a time, there is corresponding extravagance; loss comes at last, and the party is either overtaken by justice, or hides himself in the crowd of thieves.

Even where there is no improper example on [redacted] part of the employer, the vast wealth which [redacted]bout him, and which passes through his [redacted] a sore temptation to the youth [redacted]leasures, all of which invite

him, and none of which he has the power of enjoying.

Still another cause, if not so directly as these of the production, yet of the concentration and concoction of crimes and criminals, which exists in the nature of the Babylon itself, more especially within these few years, is that which may be denominated the *local*, or perhaps the *architectural*,—the numbers of small houses that have been created in the outskirts of the town. These have been constructed at a cheap rate, out of the ruins of old buildings and the rubbish of new. The builders seem never to have considered whether these were wanted or not; and thus they have erected hundreds of them in places where there is not work for a single labourer, and which consequently such a labourer could not occupy without wasting a good deal of his time and his strength in going to and from his work. Those then who have built them have been obliged to leave them empty, to let them, if that was possible, at an under-value, or to sell them for what they would bring. The first of these modes would, from the fragile nature of the materials and the impe[illegible] manner in which they are put together[illegible] a total loss; and therefore the ch[illegible] the second and the third, and [illegible] with any reference to [illegible]

society, but by the wealth or the poverty of the builder. If the former be his condition, he himself beats up for such tenants as he can get; and if the latter, he finds a purchaser, a more efficient agent in the same operation; and the "new row," with some sounding name upon it, is forthwith converted into a den of thieves. These dens are usually found in back lanes, and obscure and remote places, which are unpaved, covered with mud and mire, imperfectly lighted, if lighted at all, and into which the guardians of the night never deign to look,—as their operations there would be all labour and no reward, and the labour would not be unaccompanied with danger.

When a place of this description once gets haunted with such characters, there is hardly any possibility of ejecting them. The landlord will not do it, because he would have no chance of getting other tenants; nobody else can, unless they were to indict the houses as nuisances; and as one is just as much a nuisance as another, there is of course nobody to complain.

Whether this evil admits of any remedy, is not [illegible]me to say; but this much is certain, that, if [illegible]men—and some of them are very wise—[illegible]d do more" for the out-parishes of [illegible] devote to it a very small por-[illegible]ention which they devote

to the swelling of the local imposts and the mystification of the local expenditure, possibly they might do some good, and certainly they could not make matters worse than they are without their interference—and that, in their case, is saying more than those who are not familiar with the municipalities of the Babylon are aware of.

The plans are bad, not only on account of the parties to whom these low houses are let, but on account of the other characters that they receive as lodgers and inmates. The houses look so new and so simple, and the starved pigs nozzle and grunt about with such an air of destitution in the lane, that you would think the whole row a chosen dwelling of innocence; but such are the places to which stolen goods are taken for concealment, in which base coin is manufactured, and to which an occasional "nodding" peripatetic is wiled in the evenings, and haply not heard of again, save in the newspapers, as "the gentleman who left his lodgings."

These are not the only places of the Babylon where misery and crime are produced by lodging-houses for miscellaneous persons; for among the poorer tradesmen of the place it is too much the custom to rent houses, of many times the extent they have any use for, and let off the greater part. This distracts their attention, and corrupts their

morals; they all become demi-thieves, that is, they board upon those with whom they lodge, and if the occupation be profitable, they care not much for the morality.

In most parishes of the Babylon, there is as much "levied and lost," as would, in supplement to all the absolute good that is done with it, pay for the keeping of a register of the characters of all the housekeepers, with the names and addresses of their referees; and there might be some means of compelling those who parcelled out their houses as lodgings for any period, however short, to furnish the names and references, or descriptions of their lodgers. This would give to the Babylonian crowd all that knowledge of each other which is possessed in villages, without the evil.

CHAPTER VII.

BABYLONIAN INIQUITIES. β.

" Laws made or used by blockheads, tend
To tear the morals they should mend."

BESIDES the domestic, the professional, and the architectural, there are other sources of Babylonian crime; and one which seems to be very productive, is what may be termed the *parochial.* That, however, is not a source in the Babylon itself, but it is in the close vicinity.

In the districts immediately surrounding London, a great number of labourers are employed at seasonal occupations, such as agricultural operations, and the making of bricks. It might perhaps be a hard case, at least it would appear to be so in the first instance, and the parties themselves would think it hard and cry out against it as such,—if the seasonal employer were compelled to support his

labourers all the year round; but it would be a great advantage both to the labourer and the public. The labourer would be localized, and thus there would be imposed on him the necessity of supporting a character; and even though his wages during the season of labour should be less, he would, upon the whole, be more comfortable, as he would not, as at present, have to vibrate between the extremes of dissipation and starving. To the public, the alteration would be a great gain: they have to support him as it is; and his necessities, and the degradation which he feels these to be, are very much against his honesty at all times, and his energy, activity, and diligence, when the season of labour again comes round.

As matters are at present managed, the return of the working season brings the labourer back to the employer, in a condition in which he is unable to make terms for himself. He is at that point of want and woe, so well depicted by the bard of Coila,—he must

> ——"Ask his mortal fellow-worm,
> To give him—leave to toil."

He must take whatever remuneration the employer is pleased to give him; and it needs no spirit of divination to see that that can be little more than the minimum of bare existence, if he is hired

by time. Nor fares it much better with him though he is engaged by measure, even if he is a skilful and a powerful labourer;—the former of which he may be, but, from the manner in which he has fared during the period when he could find no work, he has but small chance of being the latter; for his work being in the open air, under the burning sun, and exposed to the suffocation of dust, he must have some liquid to prevent the machine of nature from getting so stiff that it will not work. The only drink that he can get, is the black fluid from the great brewer's public-house—most aptly called "*Justice's juice*,"—"doctored" by the brewer, and quacked by the publican, till it be little else than water, salt, and "bitter herbs;" and the more he drinks at it, the more is his thirst increased, till the "score" to which he has been compelled, and compelled in consequence of his very anxiety to do well, consumes the greater part of what he has to receive on Saturday night; and thus, if he have a family, though he may be able to provide them with something like a meal on the Sunday, they must beg, steal, or starve through the week. Nor is even this all; for, bad as the fluid is, the drinking of it becomes a habit, and the chances are that the half of what is saved from it during the week will be spent upon it on the Sunday.

Hence, a stranger who comes to the Babylon for the first time, and is in consequence ignorant of the extremes of its customs and appearances,—who, even in the working season, has seen the glories of the city, and feasted his eyes upon the grandeur glittering of the public walks, rides, and drives,—and who, dazzled and overcome by these, so different from the Sunday sights in his homely and simple parish, wishes to escape to the distance of a mile or two, in order that he may breathe something more balmy than nitre, charcoal, and powdered flint, and recover the tone of his worn-out eyes upon the unpretending freshness of nature's own colour—holds up his hands in utter astonishment, when he finds hundreds of young and able-bodied men, who, from the memorials upon their rags, must be not only labourers, but labourers in present employment, tumbled in heaps by the way-side, without a change of coat or of linen, and supplicating his charity, as if they were ship-wrecked mariners cast upon some desolate isle, which afforded them nothing but the brown and barren earth whereupon to lie.

No doubt many of those peripatetics, who come and go with the season, are anxious to combine begging and other means with labour, in order that they may the more comfortably enjoy the rest of the year in—"Ireland or elsewhere;" and it

may be also that many of them are impostors, or thieves in *esse*, who take that means of profiting as much as they can by the "idle day," disguising their real intentions, and watching their opportunity of robbing the houses of the pious when at prayers, or of the wandering when abroad, or what they are pleased to call "enjoying a bit of pleasure."

But still, many of them are natives, who would appear decent, go to church, and remain honest, if their destiny would suffer them. But if the able-bodied are found in this state during the season of labour, what must be the condition of the young even then? And what must it be when labour ceases, and the scanty wages are at end? They can have no moral instruction; and, which is more fatal at the time, they can have no food unless they steal it. But what is ironically said of honour, is true of honesty,

"Its least part crack'd, the whole does fly."

When the first step in seizing that to which the seizer has no title is taken, how small however that step may be, the fabric of honesty is levelled with the dust, and the party will never make one effort to rebuild it, unless won thereto by the most cautious and at the same time the most kindly expostulation and instruction. The little urchin who

at first filched only a bit of bread or an apple, to appease his hunger when his poor parents had nothing to offer him for that purpose, may thereby have begun a desperate career, daring from crime to crime, and descending from enormity to enormity, which has ended in "dying game" upon the gibbet, and in his latest breath cursing this world and mocking at the next.

If there were any means of obtaining it with accuracy, the moral and intellectual history of one who had come from destitution in infancy, through all the gradations of crime, to a public forfeiture of his life in manhood, would be a document of the utmost importance in the study of human nature, as well to the legislator as to the philosopher; and indeed, criminal legislation cannot be perfect, cannot proceed upon the proper principle—that of tempering the law to the moral feeling and physical necessity of the party, or attain the proper end—the prevention of crime, without some such document.

The possession of it seems, however, to be exceedingly difficult, if not altogether impossible. By hypothesis, the party is too young and too destitute of instruction for having any very keen moral perception, even at the outset; and as crime mounts up, the feeling sinks down; the man loses sight of the distinction of right and wrong; and, as he is

ejected from society, he very naturally takes up the sentiment which Milton puts into the mouth of the arch-fiend, as the last scintillation of sorrow and remorse is dying away, and he is settling down into the final desperation of "obdurate pride, and steadfast hate,"

"Evil, be thou my good!"

The external workings may, indeed, be seen—at least seen in part; but they are not seen by those who can either make a proper use of them themselves, or so describe them as that that use can be made by others. Men do not heed the successive steps by which the ultimate punishment of the law is arrived at: they take them as all history is generally taken—the mere story, without the sequence of cause and effect,—the facts without the philosophy; and therefore, though they may have all by rote, they have nothing by reason. They are like a clown who, if he wished to have a watch to let him know the hours, should purchase the parts in a box all asunder: the watch is all there; but the clown is never a bit the wiser, as to what it is o'clock.

They may season their conversation with the successive parts; and their wonder may rise, and their thanksgiving "that they are not like that man" may rise, in proportion to their estimate of

their own morality; and when the catastrophe comes, they divide into sections:—the companion in deeds calls upon the convict to be firm and manly, and do justice to the profession, leave a name that may rouse others to imitation;—the virtuous, those who are content and quiet in the possession of their own virtue, "pass by on the other side;"—the converters, that is, they who convert the appearance of religion to their own purposes—labour to establish the credit of their craft, open their book, turn their muzzles toward the zenith, roll their eyes toward the candle that is within them—"*exorciso!*"—*exit* the fiend, and the convict is a saint;—the crowd come to gape, and laugh, and jostle each other, as they would do at a puppet-show or a mob oration;—the pickpockets ply their calling to great profit, and chuckle over their booty as a legacy left them by their dear departed friend;—and the legislator rises up, shakes his wisdom and his wig, makes a long speech about the vast increase of crime, and, to save himself the long answer to the short question "why?" adds another thong to the lash, and another cubit to the gallows.

Through the want of information, the men who "make and mend" the criminal laws, must make and alter them, as it were, to fit themselves. "What can we *reason*, but from what we *know*?" and *legislation without reason* is but another name

for legislation without meaning,—might have been predicted as such beforehand, and proves to be such in the application. They admit that every time the matter is quacked, it gets worse; and yet they continue to apply the same plaster and exhibit the same bolus,—tempting the uninterested—the *unengaged,* rather, for all are interested—that they, like other quacks, care not for recovery or torture, so that they can but keep the patient alive and get the fee. It would, perhaps, be no bad experiment to suspend the criminal laws, one by one, till the effect of the absence of them were seen; as that would be an indirect, and apparently the only means of getting at their worth. That, however, is a subject for higher heads than mine; and though I cannot help feeling a little indignation, and something else, at the way in which this, one of the most vital subjects of domestic policy, is treated: but they are learned persons, and I have no right to lecture them; nor is it very likely that they would be much the better if I had it, and exercised it to the length of their own deliberations and reports:

> " *Hunc igitur contra mittam contendere causam,*
> *Qui capite ipse suo, instituit vestigia retro?*"

In the surrounding districts, more especially those which are chiefly agricultural, there is not

much to tempt the cupidity of the more daring depredators of the Babylon; and therefore, if the people could all find, as the reward of their industry, that portion of comfort with which (and he is far from being ambitious) an English peasant would be satisfied, they would naturally be the abodes of innocence and content; and, from the easy access which the growers of produce have to a regular market, one would suppose that, if in any one part of the island the labourers were to be well paid, and consequently independent, it would be in those very districts. But no: between the lowness of their wages in the working season, and the miserable pittance which they at other times get cast at them, with scornings and insults, by the parochial officers—those "respectable" persons, who take their public pleasures, and support the contingencies of their hidden ones, out of the professed fund for the poor,—the labourers, instead of being in a condition to educate their children, have not the means of keeping them alive. If they escape a sterner fate, the girls may, indeed, become domestic servants,—though, from their want of education, and knowledge of the practices of the metropolis (the place to which they naturally look), they become the ready dupes and tools of those wretches who commit domestic plunder upon the middle classes of the Babylonians. But with the

boys the case is worse. As their parents are unable to apprentice them to trades, they are without the means of getting a living when they grow up; and they are without occupation at that most important period when the first—and last—notion of right and wrong is formed.

At all ages, and under all circumstances, the stomach is invincible against both the hope of reward and the fear of punishment. The crown of martyrdom may, like other crowns, have its attractions but all crowns are made and worn for exhibition; and who would put on the most painful one in the most agonizing way, in a poor hovel where there was nobody to come and look at it? There may be causes for which a man would be proud to die; but assuredly starvation in a land of abundance and luxury is not one of them; and if that would not have merit in the estimation of a man, how can it in the estimation of a boy? The promulgated doctrine may be different, but the principle upon which the destitute act—and those who frame and administer the law would act precisely in the same manner if they were reduced to the same circumstances—is, that *theft is preferable to starvation.* To say that the Lord Chancellor of England would steal a turnip, or the Archbishop of Canterbury lay violent hands upon a raw potato, sounds in the ears of those who

never knew, or thought upon want, as a most impossible and most libellous position. No offence whatever is meant to the Learning of the one exalted personage, or the Grace of the other; but really the position, instead of being either absurd or libellous, is so physically certain, that the truth of it could be proved by experiment in any one month in the year. To the individual, to *any* individual, this is true; but he who would and can earn his living, and may not, is nothing but an individual: he is *ferœ naturæ* in society, and all that the laws of society do for him is to hunt him.

From necessity, the pinching cold of the air, and the severer pinch of hunger, the children of these poor people cannot refrain from little thefts,—taking a stick out of the hedge, or a stake out of the paling, for a little bit of fire to repel one of the invaders; and any little article in the way of food, that he can come at, in order to make a partial stand against the other. Once begun, the progress is easy. The boy gets a bad name, and as his parents have not time, and probably not much disposition or capacity, either to correct him or to teach him better, the zeal of the Dogberry is up,—the man who uniformly "lets" the more powerful and accomplished and hush-money possessing thief "show what he is by stealing out of his company," if he himself have not previously

bargained to steal out of the company of the thief, lays his giant gripe upon the child of six years old, and leads him through the village as "my prisoner," flourishing his cudgel of office, and shouting his "*Io triumphe!*" as he waddles, and most likely hiccups, along.

The poor little fellow, with the big burning drops running down his cheeks the while, and showing that he wants only to be fed, and taught, and employed, and kindly and judiciously treated, in order to make him the pride of his village, or haply place him among the defenders, or the ornaments, or the benefactors, of his country, is ushered into the presence of some mighty man of the Bench, "with good fat capon lined;" it may be into that of some established promulgator of the peace of Heaven to the greatest of sinners, out of whose orchards he has filched the fatal apple,—and is by him sent a month's apprenticeship to iniquity, among greater offenders in the common gaol of the place. It is hard, it is impossible, for youth to escape the contamination of such a place. The cutting of him off from that poor hearth which, though it was miserable in the eyes of those who measure happiness by gold and what gold can purchase, was the locality of all the endearments he had met with, and all the pleasures he had known; the thought that his infant playmates, not unlikely his

associates in the fact—though their feet or their fears brought them off more swiftly and safely, are all at their pleasure, chasing the butterflies among the bushes; the tone of exultation in which his new associates talk of the freedom of their lives, and their clever and profitable exploits, all tend to entice away the attention of the infant, and make him loathe that home where he was pinched by want and exposed to danger, and long to be the constant associate of those with whom he now is.

Of all the sources whence thieves are poured into and darken the mighty flood of the Babylon, this, if not the most prolific, is certainly the most painful to contemplate; and though to those who are inured to the sight or the perpetration of it, it gives no pain—as the skinning of the eels alive gave no pain to the cook who had "been doing it any time these forty years," and thence concluded that it could give no pain to the eels, "because" they were used to it—yet there are few things more calculated to give a stranger an unfavourable impression of the municipal and fiscal talents and taste of England.

When one reflects upon the circumstances in which they are placed, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that those boys of whom the law thus cruelly makes thieves, are the very best of the whole—have the most talent, the most courage, and the most of every thing that, under proper

treatment and training, would make them active and ingenious and brave men.

The part of this which is chargeable upon the pernicious use and operation of the law, should be perhaps separated from that which is strictly parochial, and, called by its own proper name, the *fiscal* source of Babylonian crime.

It is not to the districts in the neighbourhood of the Babylon, that this *fiscal* source of crime and criminals is confined; for it is found very abundantly, and perhaps more abundantly, in the Babylon itself.

The root of the evil seems to have two branches: one, with which perhaps it would not be very easy to deal in a wholesome manner; and the other, with which it would be exceedingly simple. The first is, the very small interference of a personal nature, even in a just cause, and where it could produce nothing, but which may yet subject a man to a criminal prosecution, or a civil action of damages for an assault. The second is, giving parties their expenses, shares of fines, and other emoluments out of the case, whether as prosecutors or as witnesses. These two branches seem, in the definition, very different from each other; and yet their operation is so nearly the same, that one cannot in all cases so separate them as to say what is owing to the one and what is owing to the other.

If I might be allowed to give a chemical explanation, I would say that the danger of committing an actionable assault, while one is in the performance of an obvious and a necessary duty, is a "*disposing affinity*," a third something thrown into the retort, or alembic, or mystification pot of the law, in order to procure the union of two things that could not be united without it.

Now while the chemists affected to be moral,—to have guardian angels sit over substances just as they are sometimes said to be set over man,—this disposing affinity was looked upon with a very suspicious eye,—it was considered as an act of violence and compulsion to the substance which was adverse to the union,—a sort of coercion, forced marriage, or abduction. As, for instance, when Miss Gold peremptorily refused to enter into a union with Mr. Nitric Acid,—it may be because Mr. Nitric was a rake—a fashionable man, in the easy vocabulary of the Babylon,—and had previously flirted with all the then-born daughters of the Metals, and also with their cousins the Semis; or it may have been merely on account of his sour looks and his gnawing disposition; and if, upon this refusal, Mr. Nitric Acid, instead of going to those by whom he knew he would be better received, formed a combination or a conspiracy with Mr. Muriatic, his brother, and the two between

them brought about a forced union (which, by the way, caused the dissolution of Miss Gold); why then it was accounted harsh, unnatural, and unjust.

Now, as there is really more similarity, if not connexion, between the chemical case now put, and the fiscal one under consideration, than might at first be supposed, that which was accounted unjust in the one, cannot fail to be so in the other. It is, in both cases, the forcible union, by means of a disposing affinity, of Miss Gold, with a party with whom she has no natural desire to unite. When a little thief, who has hardly sense enough to know the difference between theft and honesty, and who consequently, as is said of a Russian boor, has no sense of morality but in his skin, pilfers a little article, the only way that the necessity of not doing the same again can be imposed upon him is a whipping at the instant; and, if his parent or guardian be not hard by, or will not do it, by the party against whom the offence is committed. That, however, though it would have every chance of curing the fault in the individual offender, and preventing the example from spreading to others, would bring no profit to the officer of justice; "and who," says the Dogberry, "would perform so ungracious a duty, if there were not something to be made by it?"

Those who make their profits, whether they be called expenses, or fines, or fees, out of the individual cases of delinquency, have by that very means an interest in the increase of crimes, and must go about to increase them by every means that their ingenuity can devise. They are mercenary sportsmen; and therefore it must be their constant endeavour to encourage the breed of game, and to prevent poaching. In this the prohibition to neglect summary chastisement upon those found in the fact of theft, acts as a sort of game law. Their profits, too, are not in proportion to the game that they run down, but of that they start. They are "active officers;" and thus they get their expenses whether those whom they apprehend and prosecute be convicted or not. It is in fact their interest that conviction should not take place; and that for various reasons. The acquittal, if it be a triumphant one, is a sort of whitewashing; and, especially if it be a first appearance on the boards, the party goes into society with a better chance of "doing business again," than if he had not been apprehended; he is put to the proof—is a "tried" man, as it were. Again, he who has been once tried for an offence and acquitted, knowing himself to be guilty, is almost certain of committing another. The chance of es-

cape, even though detected, is one of the favourable elements in daring to commit crime; and if experience add an instance of certainty to a man's belief that he will escape, he is sure to go on with more confidence than before. Thus by procuring an acquittal the officer lays the foundation of future profits, and lays it very securely.

Even if the officer himself be the prosecutor, he can take means to defeat his own cause. He may feel the pulses of the witnesses; and if they be of a class with which he cannot with safety tamper himself, he may point out the way to others. If, again, the officer be merely a witness, he can go to greater lengths, and he is naturally disposed to do it; for in driving the private prosecutor out of the field, and making hay in time and money for having suffered, he is, according to the Dogberry game laws, prosecuting a poacher. Anxious to give all the information that he can, or chooses, to the prosecutor, in the hope of being paid by him; bustling in the court, in order that the appearance of an ardent love of justice may do him service with the bench, he nevertheless organizes the whole matter for the prisoner; and through his confederate defeats the "ends" of justice; and all this for the double purpose of having a character "well known to the police," with whom he can "do bu-

siness," or catch and call up again, according as the one or the other shall appear to be the more profitable.

Even this is not the whole, or even the worst, effect of the system. The law, by making the prosecution of the offender a matter of profit and loss to the party prosecuting, whether that party be the one who suffered or the one who took into custody, points as plainly to a settlement out of court, as if every penal statute on the book were indorsed with this alternative. "Be it enacted that, in the event of its being more conducive to his, her, or their personal interest, the said party may or shall compound for the said felony or other offence, with or without previous reference to any officer or court of justice."

Under such circumstances, there is no need to wonder at the number of compromises that take place, and the daring manner in which they are made. There is no more voluntary crime in the business than there was in Falstaff's treason, which "lay in his way, and he found it." If a robbery to a great extent has been committed, by one having much experience and connexion in the "profession," (and novices seldom undertake those weighty matters,) the losing party, if he prosecute—even though he prosecute the real robbers—has no chance of getting back a shilling of that

which he lost! but must throw away an additional thousand or two of "good money" in a vain attempt to get at that which is "bad!" There are not many persons so patriotic as to do this; and why should there? To procure the hanging of a thief may be very meritorious, in the eyes of those who go and gaze at it as a spectacle; but that man who can find satisfaction in paying for the hanging of the thief that robbed him, has not much to boast of either in the way of sense or of feeling. The mercantile principle—the ruling one in most places, and the *primum mobile* in the Babylon—pleads rather to have the half, or almost any part of the property back again; and there appears nothing in reason to bar the plea.

But there are some reasons why the party prosecuted should not be the party really guilty. It is the interest of the actual thief, or rather of the actual receiver of the stolen property, (for in nine cases out of every ten the thief is little else than the tool or the dupe of the receiver, and is not very often overpaid for the labour and danger that he undergoes,)—it is the interest of both these parties to set the prosecutor upon a wrong scent; and as the ingenuity of thieves and thief-employers is considerable, they are at some pains in laying their false scents, by placing near the scene of action at the time a decoy, with witnesses to give as much evidence as,

in the case of one "well known to the police," (and the decoys are always of that description,) satisfy the magistrate and probably also the grand jury. Then, when the weight and wisdom of the law are busied in this fool's occupation, the real perpetrator escapes without suspicion, and the receiver gets the stolen property altered and disposed of with the greatest ease.

The real thieves, they that carry on the greatest depredations against the public, however well they may be known to the police in private, are very seldom brought up to the police-offices. That would spoil the trade, render them unfit for their calling, and therefore, when they once get so careless or fool-hardy as to allow themselves to be taken, unless they can get clear off and establish their characters, it is the interest of the fraternity to get them out of the way, not only because they would thenceforth be useless, but because of the disclosures which, in the recklessness of their despair, they might make. When the man is completely known to the profession, he is, if possible, sent to a distant part of the country, or to a foreign country, as an agent; and when he is such as cannot be trusted, he is lost sight of, in a way which, though none but the profession can be sure of, the public cannot help guessing.

The tide of persons, prone and almost neces-

sitated to commit offences against the great Babylonian idol, which is poured from all those sources, is truly overwhelming; but it is dark, deep, and difficult to be fathomed; and I really do not very well know what to say to the reader for inflicting so much of it upon him, unless it be that it is the most important and the least understood of all the endless succession of subjects connected with the moral and social analysis of the mighty city. All that I have done is, indeed, little more than a mere scratch in the epidermis; and though I have, as the saying is, "looked into the books," I have not been able to find any thing that tended at all to bring the subject within the province of reason and philosophy,—excepting those who were interested in some way or other, and they of course argued (or rather asserted) in favour of their interest,—I have never been able to meet with any one who would take upon him to say that one of the numerous fiscal regulations of the Babylon produces good or evil.

In supplement to those causes, which are palpable and incessant in their operation, there are many others that act partially and at times. Of these I shall mention only one; and, in mercy to the reader, I shall say as little about it as ever I can.—Misfortune is, in the Babylon, a frequent and fertile course of crime; and there are many

persons who are criminal, because the world will not suffer them to be virtuous,—that steal because society says to them in a voice which never lies, the voice of deeds—"If ye be honest, ye shall surely die:"—"If ye be virtuous, then perish in your virtue." I mention not this as any plea in favour of guilt, or even of the guilty; but I do mention it as a stigma on society, which, while it squanders so much upon the worthless, should yet be so constituted as that it will not suffer some of its members to be virtuous. Of the throng that career through the streets of the Babylon, there are many thousands, and these not occasional visitors, but those who have made it their permanent abode, staked all their hopes and expended all their exertions upon it, who are yet mere floating things upon its surface, and have not a visible point to which a rope might be put out, or a fathomable spot upon which an anchor could be dropped, if the wind of fortune should blow adversely and strong: subsistence is found without connexion, and society and amusement without friendship; and while matters go well, there is a delightful freedom in this; but one step injudiciously taken by the party, or by another, or some turning up of chance which gives "no sign of its coming," may in an instant leave the man who, in the Babylon, is "on the town" from day to day,

or even in a position which procures permanent independence, more utterly lone and desolate than if he were in the widest wilderness on the face of the earth. There, though he would be in the country of the savage, he would be in the condition of the savage; he might hunt, or fish, or pull fruit, or dig up roots, at perfect liberty, and without any crime. But, in the Babylon, every thing is appropriated, save the thick atmosphere, and the thicker water of the Thames; and, massy though these be, they do not afford that support to the destitute which would be found in the wilds of Canada or Siberia. It is true that there are, in the Babylon, places upon which there is inscribed "The Refuge of the Destitute;" but when those who are really and utterly destitute do apply there, they find that the inscription is a lie: "Whose recommendation have you?" asks the fat porter at the gate; and the destitute, forbidden to beg, and having no "settlement" in a parish, must throw himself into the river, or steal, or starve.

The very facility with which, at other times, employment and enjoyment are obtained, hastens and darkens the crisis in those reverses. "It is but temporary, and will blow over," says the party. "There are a few things of value left;" and these, one by one, find their way to the pawnbroker's, for mere trifles, in order that the redemption of them

may be easy; but the misery continues, and the day of redemption never comes. Thus the means of relief resorted to, generally, if not invariably, both accelerate and deepen the ruin; and could it be put in practice, there is no sounder maxim—none, the following of which would prevent greater misery, than this: "If matters are utterly hopeless, avoid the curse of the three balls, as you would the most deadly poison." When there is hope—no, not *hope*,—when there is *certainty* in the vista of the twelve months, you may (though not without great loss and imminent danger) go there; but, if not, you had better die at once.

Though too great an aptitude for this most costly and most destructive of all opiates, all stupefactions—a stupefaction which bears the label, "I augment the disease even to the death," plain upon it,—daily precipitates many of the Babylonians, of both sexes, into ruin, wretchedness, immorality, and violent death, either by their own hands, or those of the executioner; yet it is possible that it is most destructive to the females. With more ardent feelings, they have not the same habits of resource as the other sex; and thus, they are apt to convert a temporary embarrassment into general poverty and ruin,—to throw away in the first week of the reverse, as much as might have supported them during the six months that would

have brought them again buoyant over the flood of misfortune. If those "lost ones," whose sufferings almost invariably have preceded and continue to overtop their crimes, were interrogated on this subject, and would tell the truth, they would reveal a manufactory of vice, which would go far to justify the hanging of every man who throws out the abominable lure,—even though there were in no case, as it is alleged there is in many, any connexion between the licensed means of accelerating the ruin of the needy, and the illicit receiving of that which is never intended to be redeemed.

The conduct of these persons is, however, the consequence of the evil, and not its cause. They are "wreckers;" and wherever they are found, one may be sure that the coast is dangerous and exposed to storms. It takes advantage of the misery that it finds in the Babylon, and this leads to an aftermath of misery; but if there were not antecedent misery, it would not have scope.

How and what portion of the undone of the Babylon fall into the mass of the criminal, there are no direct means of ascertaining, as the subject has not, so far as I know, engaged the attention of one man of speculation. It must depend much on the mind of the parties, as respects both its original strength, and the training and discipline that it has undergone; and as it is doubtful whether

the modern mental discipline contributes much to strength, whatever it may to gloss and glitter, it may be that the criminal part is on the increase.

It has been said that self-destruction is the "vice of England," and in a pre-eminent degree of the Babylon: but this is not true; for in proportion to the number of the people, there are more suicides in almost any other country than in England, and more in almost any other town than the Babylon; and yet it is not easy to see how there can, in any other place, be more reverses of fortune, in which the ruined has nothing external to bear it up. It is true that, in the middle classes of society, there is not so much mere gambling in London as in some other places; but then there is far more of business gambling, not in national stocks merely, but in every description of speculation,—so that the number of the destitute, from this cause, should not be less upon the whole; and if their fall should be such as that they have no power of mounting again, their previous habits, which are those of plodding and profit, and not of turbulent feeling, would lead one to place them among those who should quietly take vengeance upon society, and not do summary execution upon themselves. Those who have been in the habit of higgling, and bargaining, and making little inroads upon the truth,

in the hope of honest gains, are at least much more likely to step forward in that way, in case of accidents, than to turn and take to a path which is entirely different.

This is a part of the subject which it is difficult to contemplate without pain. Those who are subject to the accidents that produce these fatal results, are far from being the worst of these respective classes; and therefore it would be much to the honour, a good deal to the morality, and not a little to the profit of the Babylon, if some means of saving them could be devised. This is the more desirable when it is borne in mind that, with all its faults, the Babylon is the grand place, perhaps the only place, where human talents are sure to find their value. If a man be worth any thing, there is always another man in the Babylon prepared to give the full value for him, if he could but find him out; and what is wanted, is to preserve the man till he who wants him can be found.

CHAPTER VIII.

BABYLONIAN INIQUITIES.—γ.

So many pages have been devoted to the causes of Babylonian crime, to those circumstances in and about the place which tend to make men wicked, that little space is left in which to point out how this criminality works. This is the less to be regretted, because the public features of the iniquity are open to everybody, and the secret springs and combinations to none, saving the members of the profession, and those police-officers, attorneys, and others, who "do the needful for them" in the characters of spies, decoys, go-between, counsellors, or any other services which one rogue may render to another.

Very simple persons, who live in places where "every body knows every thing about every body," are apt to wonder why the pure courts of London should license a man of law, whose chief craft

and source of gain is enabling thieves to break the law with impunity; but those who are acquainted with the matter, look upon it with indifference, as of course and unavoidable. There are licence-duties, and licence-fees; and, as all men must live, it is, "So God help you—kiss the book—one shilling." The head of the office, even conceding him, what one is not absolutely bound to concede, the perception and the purity of an angel, must see with the eyes and feel with the feelings of others; and there is no official chain which has not somewhere a "slipable" link, which may be "done and undone" upon occasions. Since the grand object of Babylonian pursuit is money, there is always somebody who will do whatever produces the most of that; nor is this fact any particular stigma upon the Babylon; for the born and the imported do it alike, and the only thing that London supplies more than other places, is a greater crowd and less individual acquaintance.

Attempts have sometimes been made to ascertain the numbers of those who, in and about London, or in the London connexion, carry on crime as a trade, and to arrange them into classes, from the infant who picks pockets of handkerchiefs in the street, to the "wholesale dealer," who "cleans out" a warehouse in the Ward of Cheap, or carries off the stock of a country-bank, and sends it up to

town by relays of horses previously prepared and organized, so that the notes may be turned into gold, or placed where they may be come at by negotiation, before the owners be aware that they are gone. This, however, is little better than guess-work; and even though it could be accurately done, it would not furnish a much better key to the arcana of the system, than a plan of the streets would form to the moral, intellectual, and social character of the Babylon.

Perhaps the best, and certainly the simplest division, is that of occasional dealers and regulars; or, as they would be called in any honest corporation, non-freemen and freemen. When corporate thieves are mentioned, it must not be understood that they consult and act as a whole body in the individual depredations. That, notwithstanding the *esprit du corps*, the odium and the dreadful punishments that are inflicted upon him who informs, or "splits" (punishments from which the law has no power of protecting him, other than sending him to a place where he shall not be found out)—would be a dangerous matter. The intercourse is such as to produce acquaintance; and tends to protect every individual thief against the laws and the honest part of society; and when concert is required for any one crime, it is obtained, though always with the least possible number that can accom-

plish it; because in the augmentation of the number, there is always an increase of danger.

Some five or six desperadoes do occasionally form themselves into a gang, and attack a particular district of the town or the suburbs; but it is doubtful whether these be not disliked and informed on by the rest. The operative thief is, like all other operatives, a servant; and his profits, out of that which he procures, are like those of other labourers, the minimum that will support him. The receiver—the villain who keeps the *fence*, and who takes care never to run any risk, is the one who reaps the greater part of the advantage; and while the one who actually steals is always known to him, he is not always known by him in return.

The "very respectable tradesmen," who keep general sale shops, live approved in society, serve the parish offices, go to the church, the meeting-house or the synagogue, make their fortunes, retire, and sometimes get themselves elevated to the bench as justices of his Majesty's peace, would not do to come directly and every day into contact and bargain and sale with one who, whatever may be the precautions taken, never can be absolutely certain that the gallows is not at the end of his journey. It would be dangerous for himself; and it would be ruinous for the craft.

If a thief could "make his election" in stealing—get hold of money, or of the article which, without detection, he could apply to the satisfaction of his want or his wish at the time, then the thief would be an independent man, and might act just as he pleased. Were this the case, it is to be feared that, many as do at present follow it, the numbers would be greatly increased. That, however, neither is nor can be the case; the thief cannot do without the *fence*, though the fence might do without the thief; and thus, while the thief runs all the risk, the fence earns the greater part of the profits. This is borne out by the fact, that even the most daring and successful thieves are found in a condition of great wretchedness; and the greatest booty that they get, seldom serves for more than a week or two of dissipation. Thus it is probable that, if the practice did not meet with encouragements greater than the mere love of stealing in the party who steals, it would not flourish as it does.

Those who pretend to know the matter, divide this encouragement among three parties—the keepers of fences, where the things stolen are purchased, directly in minor cases, and indirectly in major ones; the keepers of "flash houses," where thieves meet and carouse; and—the police.

The *fences* are a regularly organized body, having their rules of business, and their agents and

correspondents all over the country, and even abroad; and by their means the theft of one nation is made to encourage the theft of another, without the labourers being able to tell why,—just as the growth of sugar in the West Indies, and that of hemp in Courland and Livonia, encourage each other without the boor or the negro knowing any thing about the matter. The existence of these houses is very well known, and *there are* persons who could point out the individuals; but they are cunning and cautious, generally rich as individuals and always rich and powerful as a body, so that it is doubtful whether any private prosecutor could bring a case home to them, as swearing and quibbling, those most powerful auxiliaries of injustice, would be exerted, and most likely with success. One does not see very well how the line of distinction could be drawn, so as that the premises of those "masters of fence" could be effectually searched, and they themselves brought to punishment, without the power of doing so being sometimes perverted to the injury of the virtuous part of society.

John Bull, with perfect indifference, sees a man cast into prison, or his house entered by plunderers, for the crime of being poor,—poor too, very frequently, just because he is honest; and he calls it law and justice, and puts himself in "a fine frenzy"

if any body proposes to alter it;—but, so that the fence-master, the notorious employer of thieves, the man who keeps his spies to reconnoitre where there is property, how it may be come at, and when the owners are off their guard, is rich,—John is wroth if the law offers to meddle with him.

There is one thing that may increase John's reluctance to meddle with these cases, and which, by the way, points, as so many things else do, to the necessity of a system of public prosecution, in which the prosecutor shall be above, and independent, of all fees, expenses, shares of fines, or bribes, (to tempt a greater bribe from the guilty party,)—and that is, the system of common informers, unprincipled villains, who prowl about for plunder, as dogs do in the streets of Lisbon, or hyænas in the African villages, who make many of the faults against which they inform, and who probably never bring one case forward if they can make a penny more by keeping it back. The *fence* does not commit the crime directly against the individual, and so the individual can appear against him only as an informer; and though he could appear in the other character, it comes so near to that of the informer, in the estimation of the public, that though it certainly partakes of none of the guilt, it is impossible to keep it clear of a certain portion of the infamy.

After all, one does not really see why there should be whole streets and neighbourhoods of persons, all of whom are known to be receivers of stolen goods, and who, though they profess to keep open shops for the sale of frippery and trinkets, yet must do little or nothing in that way, as the things which they *expose* for sale remain the same and unchanged, month after month and year after year.

These keepers of fences are divided into as many classes as the various departments of honest trade. Some of them go about from one flash house to another, collecting the small and portable articles, and learning where the more bulky ones are secreted for the time, in order that they may be securely lodged in the depot; another set go to the flash workmen, with such articles as by erasure and alteration can be made to pass for new, and be sold at the regular prices to the regular trade. To these the marks of most of the makers are known, by their acting also in the capacity of town salesmen between the manufacturers and the shopkeepers; and in that part of their dealings they are remarkably honest and punctual, because it is the cloke under which they carry on their more profitable, but less honest practices without suspicion, and therefore without danger. By them stolen plate, watches, and trinkets, that can be made new

again, are carefully examined with microscopes; every scratch is burnished out, lest it should be somebody's private mark; and when they are stamped with private marks, these are either punched down by the mark of one of their own makers, or they are so altered, that not even those by whom they were originally impressed can make them out. By this means, goods which have been sold by an honest shopkeeper, may be stolen, altered, sold back to him as the productions of another maker, and probably resold, all in the course of one month. When this can be done, it is the most profitable way; but it is dangerous, and only resorted to where the party employing the others knows that he could be beforehand with them in the law, should they feel inclined to disclose his villainy. Those agent thieves are, however, generally the most cunning of the whole; and as their peripatetic habits give them an intimate knowledge of all that is done, and all who do it, both operatives and fences treat them with the greatest caution and respect. They make it a point, too, never to commit any felony with their own hands, or to be near when any felony that has the appearance of being previously concerted, is perpetrated, and thus they are enabled to act as go-betweens in cases of compromise; or employ lawyers, or police men, when the matter can be more safely done by these.

Flash-houses are for various purposes, according to their situations. Near the great theatres—and indeed near all the theatres, and wherever there is a crowd at late hours, and some of those composing it, as is the case with all such crowds, in a state of intoxication, the flash-house answers two purposes, or rather three purposes,—robbery in the streets, by pocket-picking; plunder within the den, either by fraudulently played games, or by robbery during the squabbles, in which, when these do not succeed in taking all that the dupes have without it, the matter is sure to end; and drugging the parties with stupifying potions, and then plundering them while they are insensible. The victims of those places are, of course, not very elevated persons either in station or in understanding. They are mostly young men in houses of business, and raw strangers in town, who fall into these haunts partly through ignorance, partly through the want of some connexion at home, and partly through a love of dissipation—which the two former circumstances are very apt to produce and foster.

If the sufferer be from the country, and, smit by the ribaldry of those who write in aid of blackguardism, (for that too has its portion of the press and its puffing,) or of any thing else, resolves to see a little of what is called "life," and to see it, as it were, snugly and incog., the chance is that the pro-

perty which he loses is his own, that the lesson is not lost upon him; but that, carefully concealing his own personal knowledge of it, he edifies his cousins and cronies at home with fearful homilies upon the horrible depravity of the metropolis—a depravity of which he might have lived in total ignorance, if he had not sought for it.

On the other hand, if the victim be resident in town, there may be a chance that the property which he loses is not his own; or if it be, he may be tempted to borrow that with which he is intrusted, for the time as it were, in order to serve the necessity which that would have served; and thus he is in a fair way of, at no distant period, joining in the iniquity, and practising upon others that which was practised on himself.

At these houses, females are almost uniformly employed as associates; and instructed in the art of exciting all manner of disturbances. If their blandishments succeed, the matter is an easy one; and if the dupe does not allow himself to be robbed quietly, he is almost sure to be thrashed, sent to the watch-house for the night, brought before the Minos and Rhadamanthus of Bow in the morning, and possibly committed for the assault. One cannot sympathize very much with such a sufferer; and yet it is rather a queer sort of justice which punishes, however foolish he may have been, the ac-

tually aggrieved party, and allows that, which if it does not see to be the real aggressor it must be blind indeed, to escape.

If the blandishments of the "lady" *(proh pudor!)* will not effect her purpose, she can assault, crying out all the time that she is assaulted, or in various other ways collect a mob, or facilitate plunder. Even the most careful person has no certain means of safety but in keeping away; and the faster that one attempts to bustle past, the danger is sometimes the greater, because these females are instructed to give what is called "a hit in the wind," which, if it be given with the joint velocities of the victim and the blow, is almost certain of either tumbling him down in the street, or of stupifying him for a sufficient length of time for having his person rifled of every thing valuable, by those kind assistants to whom the blow is the signal. The attention of any disinterested person that may happen to be there, is taken off by the fainting or the cries of the female, who is always dead, or the next thing to it, while her accomplices are reaping the harvest.

The haunts where pugilists hold their orgies and make their matches and their bets, are a sort of flash-houses; and though, to the regular attendants, any thing that may happen be in the "diamond cut diamond" way, and not at all interesting to the

rest of the world, yet they still continue to draw the attention of a few of the simple and the idle, and occasion both misery and crime. Of late years, however, they have fallen off wonderfully in popularity, and consequently in the power of doing mischief: a reform which may be attributed to two causes,—people in high life have in a great measure got ashamed of and deserted them; and those in humble circumstances have begun to devote a good deal more of their time to reading and study, occupations so much more pleasant and easy and profitable than brawling and dissipation, that the rapid extension of them must do more to correct the abominations of the Babylon, than all the labours of legislation and law. And now again I cannot help adverting to that society—the most rational, the most pure, and the most useful that, perhaps, ever was formed, which has made, and is making so much progress in laying the whole storehouse of knowledge open to every class of the people, and saving them equally from the darkness of ignorance and the duplicity of quackery. There can be no question that, whatever may be the accidental or disposing cause, the grand primary cause of vice in all its forms is, ignorance. If it were not so, then virtue would cease to be that which men should follow, and good and evil would change places. A few, even of those who ought

to know better, still linger in the shade, believe in the false doctrines, and hold dalliance with the idols—say that men will conduct themselves worse in proportion as they know that it is their interest to conduct themselves better. The doctrine, however, is so absurd, and they who hold it offer so complete a refutation of it in their own persons, that it must speedily be exploded; and the confession universally be made, that they who know their duty the best, are the most likely to perform it. This is, indeed, the sure means of striking at the causes, and consequently at the existence, of crime, whether in individual instances or in the mass of society. We have had abundant instances that a nation cannot be ruled and legislated out of irregularity; and therefore, even if it should fail—of which, from the experience that we have, there does not seem much danger—it is pleasant to try the experiment of teaching them out of it.

Another kind of flash-houses are found about that end of the town which is most frequented by sailors, a class of persons whose habitual suffering at the hands of those who are more cunning than themselves, gives additional force to the position that has just been laid down. Of those who frequent the Babylonian port, there are very many who have no relatives or connexions in the Babylon, and they come on shore generally with money,

and without any suspicion. The instant that this is known, they are beset with thieves, and literally forced into haunts where, in a few days, they are compelled to barter all that they have for the very lowest dissipation. This happens in time of peace, and the parties that get hold of them entice them out of good employment, if they happen to have it, and allure them into bad, contriving, not only to rob them of all they had when they landed, but to receive by stipulation a great proportion of what they are promised in future. In times of war the same parties act as crimps for the navy; and under the pretence of concealing their dupes from the impress, sell them to the recruiting officer. In a country which depends so much upon its marine as England, it is to be regretted that some means cannot be devised of saving those gallant but thoughtless fellows from the worthless harpies of whom the majority of them become the prey.

Near the police-offices, and the seats of the criminal courts, there are flash-houses of a peculiar description. They are attended by a set of spies or scouts, who receive, sometimes through a part of their own body, and sometimes through the officers, information as to what is going on. At these houses plans are laid for circumventing the operations of justice: witnesses who will swear any thing in favour of the accused party, and agents

who will tamper with the witnesses for the prosecution, or the prosecutor himself, according to circumstances. The parties who attend them have always in their connexion a certain number of "respectable" householders, ready to swear to the good character of any one who may stand in need of this last service; and though it be known that the whole is lies, it is astonishing with what effrontery it is sometimes put forth, and with what attention it is listened to.

The most singular of the flash-houses, however, are those dens in retired places, where members of the "profession" collect together, not for the purpose either of carrying on instant depredations, or of planning future ones, but to revel in safety, and divide and occasionally sell their plunder. Those dens are commonly the property of some fence agent, who provides for the thieves, and who, while they are there, rules them with a very complete despotism, they well knowing that he is in connexion with the police, and could send any of them to trial, and probably to death, upon the first symptom of rebellion.

The situations of those dens are certainly known to some of the police-officers, and probably also to some of the police-magistrates; but they are seldom known, and more seldom visited, by any body else.

One of them was visited some years ago by a

friend of mine, in company with a police-officer, whose name he did not tell me, and which, as he said he was under a parole of honour on the subject, I of course did not press him to disclose. The occasion was this: one evening as the gentleman to whom I allude was proceeding from the city (the India-House, I believe) toward Kennington, his pocket was picked of his watch. He recollected feeling the watch in his pocket at London bridge; and was certain he had it not when he came to St. George's church, for there he was to compare it with the clock, which was striking nine. The space in which it was taken was thus a single street, and the time from "sure he had it" to "sure he had not," less than ten minutes. There was a considerable throng of people in the street, but nothing that he could consider as a crowd; and he had not been jostled, neither was there any "row" or disturbance.

The watch was of some value intrinsically; but it had to the owner a much higher value: it had been given to a friend—an ancestor of his, by no less a personage than Simon Lord Lovat, when that notorious person was on the scaffold, and just about to lay his head on the block. As such, it had been intrusted to him as a family keepsake; and thus the loss of it vexed him more than if it had been any thing else of ten times the value.

Having a few years before been a student at the Southwark Hospitals, and probably not having then been wholly ignorant of "life"—or of death either, he went straight to the house of an active officer, whom he had then known very well, and informed him of the loss. The officer inquired very minutely into the time and place, and especially whether the watch had been taken in the High-street, or any of the cross-ways or lanes, and whether peaceably and without any circumstance that could guide him nearly to the spot. "In the High-street between London bridge and St. George's church," was all the gentleman could say. "I cannot absolutely promise that we shall recover it," said the officer; "but I shall try; and if you like, you may accompany me; the sight will make some amends for your loss,—for it will be loss any way: if you get your watch, you must pay for it, and pay for it in advance." "But can I trust them, either with my life or the money, or whatever else I may have about me?" "My life for that," said the officer; "only be quiet, and stick close to me. At the same time, as they are rather shy of notes, you had better be provided in gold—say five guineas or so." The gentleman intimated that he had such a sum about him. "Then, the sooner we are off, the surer we shall be of success," said the officer; and away they went.

Passing some distance down Tooley-street, they turned to the right, and continued crossing this way and that way, and turning here and there, till my friend lost all knowledge both of situation and direction. At last they came to a place in a blind alley that had the appearance of a warehouse, not merely shut up, but absolutely deserted. "This is about the place, I think," said the officer; and muttered through a hole in the door some words, which my friend could not understand. In an instant, the glare of a dark lantern fell first upon the officer, and then upon my friend; but where it came from, the latter could not tell. A voice answered from within in the same untranslatable sounds as this singular garrison had been summoned by the officer; there was a slow creaking of bolts, and the door opened a little way, but there appeared no light from within. "Close to me and enter," whispered the officer; and instantly they were within and the door closed on them, but without light or the sound of a human voice. My friend confessed, that, for the moment, he would have given, not only Lord Lovat's watch, but, if he had had them, the Lord himself, and the whole estate, honours, tail, and following of Mac Shemie, to have been again safely in front of St. George's church. He was "in it," however, and had no alternative but to "bide his time," and get out as he best might.

They proceeded for some distance along a dark

passage, which seemed, however, to be tolerably well known to the officer. "They are rather uncivil to-night," said he, "because I have brought a stranger; but they will be less so when they know our errand." Advancing a little farther, a second door, which had stood open, closed behind them; and the moment that it closed there was light in the passage, and the sound of voices was heard. The officer again repeated his Babylonish watch-word, and they were ushered into a large apartment, containing a number of persons of both sexes. Of these, some were resting, some refreshing themselves, some engaged in deep conversation, some had property which they appeared to be sharing, some were bargaining and higgling with Jews, and some were sitting sulky and apart, as if to them that day had been a *dies non.*

Secure in their den, this assemblage of persons showed no sign of uneasiness at the appearance of their visitors, the owner of the watch being probably the only one who was under the operation of fear; and he could not help feeling that he was not altogether safe, notwithstanding the assurances which his conductor had given him, and the fact, that the only notice which he attracted was here and there a sinister squint, which, however, lasted only for the instant.

After they had stood a little to give my friend a complete view of the apartment, which seemed

to be the kitchen, parlour, and bed-chamber, of the whole, or a considerable part of the company, the officer asked if Captain J. was at home, and unengaged. "I shall see, Sir," said one of the party, and immediately went out by a door which had not been previously distinguished from the rest of the wall.

The messenger soon returned with notice that the Captain was at home, and would be glad to receive Mr. ——'s commands in his own apartment, to which the same messenger marshalled them the way, and took his leave. Captain J. was a man rather under middle age and middle stature, with features somewhat of the Israelitish cast, but prepossessing; and had he been met with in any other place, his manner, and the polite courtesy with which he received his guests, were calculated to inspire any confidence. He was genteelly dressed in black; his apartment was handsomely furnished; on the table there was a bottle of wine, with which he had been regaling himself; and the newspapers of the day, the Hue and Cry, and sundry hand-bills of "lost" watches, pocket-books, and other articles, were beside him for his intellectual edification. He rose and welcomed the officer as one with whom he was well acquainted, and bowed to the stranger, asking them to be seated, and join in his potation.

The officer hinted that the gentleman had a little business, in which, probably, the Captain could assist; and the Captain replied that, whatever was in his power should be done "in the usual way." "That, of course," said the officer, and described minutely the article lost, and the time and place of the loss. "Excuse me for a minute or two," said the Captain, and left the apartment. My friend's curiosity, which had been not a little wound up, was about to be set a-going in some remarks upon the scene, but the officer cut him short by some trivial observation on the news or the weather, and, the hint being taken, the cause was seen in a speaking-pipe close by them.

In a very short time the Captain returned, and said the watch could be recovered; but, as the recovery would be attended with a good deal of trouble, he could not undertake it for less than five guineas, which would have to be paid down, and the watch would be forthcoming the next morning. The five guineas were paid over to the Captain, the owner instructed to be in front of St. George's church next morning, as the clock was striking twelve, for the purpose of receiving his watch; and that being arranged, the officer said, "Now, Captain, we shall taste your wine, if you please." "With all my heart, and welcome," said the Captain, ringing the bell. A smart lass, in the

usual costume of a waiting-maid, answered it, and without orders brought glasses and a fresh bottle: as she set which on the table, she eyed the stranger with a keenness that almost pierced him through, and then left the apartment. This very naturally produced a fresh twinge of apprehension, and diminished the relish of Captain J.'s wine; from which, however, the officer showed no symptom of moving till they had drained the "other" bottle; and as the other party knew not how to make his escape without his guide, and considered him his chief means of safety, he submitted to his fate, and put the best face on it that he could.

The officer at last rose, and the Captain conducted them by a way quite different in direction and appearance from that which they had entered; and opening a door, shook hands with the officer, and bidding the other be punctual to his time, and all would be right, re-entered the door, and closed it after him; and they, pushing forward by a passage which my friend did not very well know at the time, and never could find afterwards, were very soon in the High-street. "This is a shorter road," said my friend. "Yes, and a more difficult one," replied the officer.

Anxious to know something more of the matter, the gentleman asked the officer to sup with him at one of the inns in the neighbourhood. That was

declined on the plea of business; but an agreement was made for a meeting the following evening in another and distant part of the town, when, as the officer said, the gentleman would have had a proof of "the way in which the profession keep their word."

At the stipulated hour, and dressed in the same clothes that he had worn on the previous evening, the gentleman made his appearance in front of the portico of St. George's. The bell tolled once, twice—eleven times, and no appearance of the watch. "The officer is a villain, and I am a dupe!" was formed in the mind and ready for utterance; but just as the last touch of the hammer awakened the bell, a lady, in most handsome attire, passed close to him, darted a look upon him, put a parcel in his hand, and vanished in an instant. He opened the parcel, and found his watch all safe, with the exception of a very massy gold desk-key, of Chinese workmanship; and as that had no value but its weight in gold, he did not heed it, as he had recovered the relic of Simon Lord Lovat.

In the evening he met the officer at the place they had agreed upon; but he was unable to obtain much additional information respecting the place of their former visit, and the parties they had seen there. Only he was assured that the practices, if not the haunts and persons of these

characters, were known to those who were much higher in the conservation of the peace and the prevention of crime than himself; and that something of the kind appeared to him to be absolutely necessary to insure the recovery of articles, for the loss of which no prosecution and punishment of the offenders, even if they should be successful, (a result which, in those quiet cases of street-robbery, in which there was no disturbance, was considered as difficult always, and in most cases impossible,) would compensate. In the course of conversation, the abstraction of the gold key was mentioned; and in a day or two it came to the gentleman's residence, in a letter bearing the general two-penny post-mark, but without any accompanying note. He supposed that the "lady," who delivered the watch in the morning was identically the "lass" who had looked so hard at him the evening before, and that the object of her scrutiny was to make sure of him again.

From the character of him to whom this adventure happened, I have no reason to doubt the truth of a single particular; and I am only sorry that I have not been able to do justice to the spirit with which the party himself told it. It will serve, however, as one authenticated instance of the appearance of a "professional flash-house," which is merely a rendezvous of thieves, and not a public-house, a gaming-house, a general sale-shop,

or any thing by which the dens of thieves are usually marked and concealed. It will farther show that there is a foundation for that third cause of the encouragement of crime—

The Police. That the encouragement of crime is in any way connected with the Babylonian police, as a system, I by no means would assert; far less that such a result entered into the craniums of those wise and careful persons, whether national, metropolitan, or *comital*, by whom the laws and working of the police have been made or directed; but, as compromises of robberies, on a large scale, in which the police are employed as agents, are not unfrequently making their appearance before the public, and as there are countless minor ones which do not publicly appear, there is no avoiding the conclusion that the police do know of the fact of property having been stolen, and the places and parties in whose hands it is, in some cases; and that, as the means of their knowledge in these cases have never been shown, or even alleged, to be any thing else than an intercourse either with the thief or the receiver,—and farther, as that, in the most full and satisfactory manner, accounts for the facts,—it is contrary both to the dictates of reason and the canons of sound philosophy to seek for any other cause. Nor is this a cause merely; there is what forms to all parties an extenuation; and to the in-

dividuals that lose their property, something which comes very near to being a justification.

No doubt the law declares the compounding of felony to be a very grievous offence against the morals of society; and they who deal out the sentences of the law express great indignation at parties who take that means of recovering a part of what they have lost; but all this may happen, and yet it may be the law which is in fault; and the law may, following the proverb, be like the thief in the chase, the first and the loudest to cry "stop."

Put the case of a man who is in the Babylon only for a few days, whose business is at Land's End or John O'Groat's, from which it would be loss, and might be ruin, were he to absent himself,—or put the case of the gentleman who lost the watch in Tooley-street—to sail the very next week for India, and enter upon a valuable appointment from which he had the certainty of living independent for life, and which would have to a certainty been filled up by another,—will any man in his senses say that he could have been expected to stay at home in order to prosecute at the sessions, at his own expense, a street thief that had picked his pocket of a watch, even though he had pretty clear evidence of the fact, and the identity, and every thing necessary for making out a case? Why should the man give up his time, and sacrifice his hopes in life for such a pur-

pose? He would be accounted mad if he did, and the account would be really very near the truth. The loss which he sustains in the first instance is, in part at least, the fault of the country—takes place because the municipal laws are not properly framed, or not properly carried into execution; and because the country has done him this injury, it would have him to take trouble, and incur the certainty of ruin by way of making him amends.

But the case is even worse than this: the party who has sustained the loss is, in all probability, ignorant not only of the robber but of the town; and as it would be useless to advertise for the offending party as a felon, that party is advertised for as a finder, and offered a reward, which comes to the same thing as a direct application to the police officer, and by a more expensive and circuitous route.

Thus, by the very necessity of the case, and without any disposition or desire on the part of the nether guardians of the laws to enter into any league or understanding with those that break them, there are a number of instances in which stolen property must be a certain and total loss, and those who steal it remain undetected and unpunished, if some who had a knowledge of these persons or haunts did not negotiate a recovery in part. Now, unless it be the police, there is not a class of persons in

the metropolis who are likely to know the haunts of those persons; and therefore there is a colour, if not of justice, at least of necessity, in the conduct which they pursue.

That necessity and that distributive justice to the individual, in those cases where it is the only remedy, do not, however, in the least diminish the moral guit of the practice, or prevent or lessen the mischief to which it must lead. There cannot be a more dangerous precedent—one which is more likely to corrupt the party, than that which permits a man, who has any thing to do in the administration of the laws, to do an illegal thing on the ground of expediency. Those who make the laws should provide for the expediency of them in the words of the statute itself; because, though a discretionary power be given to him who administers, you cannot in all cases give him the discretion. The use which justices of the peace, and even justices of a higher class, sometimes make of those discretionary powers, which incapacity or something worse on the part of the framers of the statutes have left them, often causes bitter regret that there should be such a power.

Now, if that be the case with the worshipful and the honourable—with those who have no fee from the individual case, but are deflected from the right path by errors of judgment or of feeling,

how much more must it be the case with those who, without the high attributes of worship and honour, which the names must confer on the others, may derive a great and a secret gain from the practice.

Being necessary in some cases, and profitable in all, the conduct of the police officer becomes a calculation, not of the performance or the non-performance of his duty, but one of profit and loss; and as, what with the guerdon from the one party and the bribe from the other, the compounding system is by much the more profitable, that is the one to which he must naturally be the most disposed; and thus the corruption of the officer, is a matter of natural and even necessary consequence.

Nor does the evil stop here; for the thief, if he shall go warily enough about his work, can make sure of purchasing, not what even the greatest vigilance on his own part could procure for him, a temporary and precarious concealment, out of which he would be in continual danger of being dragged; but a perfect and penal indemnity, by the prosecutor, the *corpus delicti*, the evidence and every part of the case being taken away completely and for ever. The confidence which this must give to the thief cannot fail to increase the number of his depredations and also the number of thieves;

and probably it makes them more daring and more numerous than if there were no police at all.

But if the two classes of persons be thus mutually useful to each other, there must exist on the part of each a reciprocal wish for the success of the other, and a secret desire to contribute to that success. It may be that this is predicating vice of mankind; but still it is human nature,—the principle upon which men act in all ranks of life. In those impure times of Babylonian administration, which have now happily gone by—of course the jobber and the jobbee did not reprove each other for their sins, and lay informations, and bring each other to justice. Far from it: they were sworn brothers: they blessed each other for their mutual services; and sat down together to eat and drink and be merry;—and yet the soothsayers of the Babylon place the felon and the watchman in nearly similar circumstances; and then *they accuse society of an increase of crime.*

At this stage of the business—no, not of the business, only of my way of considering it—there arises a most grave and perplexing question, a question which, if there were but one man or one score of men who lived in the Babylon, and lived well, just because there are crimes, and for no other reason, all the copper and zinc in Cornwall would not make brass enough to put. Is it,

or is it not the interest of almost every one connected with the administration of the criminal laws of England that the number of crimes should be as great as possible? No man with the evidence before him can dare to support the negative; for there is not a single stage of the business in which the matter is not worked by fees; and this being the case, unless the whole men in the business, from the finder to the finisher, were, what nobody ever thought of accusing them of, refined and elevated above the rest of mankind, freed from the operation of those motives that influence all others, and transformed into a sort of angels, I really do not see how it could be otherwise. I am not blaming the men; they do not deserve to be blamed: if you turn a hungry ox into a corn field, he will both eat the corn and trample it down; if you lodge a fox in your hen-coop you must not lay the death of the pullets at Reynard's door,—you must lay it at your own.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

Finis coronat opus.

THEN these volumes must go in plebeian plainness without so much as a coronet—a thing for a retiring gambler or a forward actress. Instead of completing the picture of the Babylon, there is absolutely no keeping of it up to the reality; for while the eye is turned but for a moment to the canvas, the original has changed—the feature that was last studied has gone never to return; and that which presents itself is not only new but wholly different. Even though I had confined myself to the mere externals—to the bricks and the mortar, to the sights and the sound, I wot not that it would have fared better with me. The changes that each year brings about are quite astonishing,—fields are palaces, palaces heaps, a frowsy neighbourhood, is airy streets and gor-

geous squares, and the former abode of nobles, is abandoned to squalour and misery, before the sun has girdled the zodiac. The surges of the deep, the clouds in the sky, the form of a lady's bonnet, the politics of a place-hunter, the fortunes of a gamester—every thing else the most inconsistent and the most irreconcileable to what we are accustomed to regard as the fixed laws of matter or of man, is constancy itself compared with the Babylon—or if there be constancy in it, it is, that it is in constant change. To those who would linger and dream upon the same idea, who would wish to find the stillness of eternity in the career of time, this may seem provoking; but it is this very change that gives to the Babylon the whole of its pleasure, and the greater part of its profit. As the same particle of matter can but touch the principle of life—if such principle there be,—and hurry away to be changed before it can be fit for another appulse, so one object can give pleasure but for a moment; and so pained are we with the continuance of sameness, that we care not much what the change is, so that it is but change.

Reader! we are safe now, (no critic will come thus far; or if he does, he will become a simple reader like yourself, deprived of all the virtue and vice of his craft, and may be accounted one of us;) and therefore we may have a sort of *tête-à-tête*

about the little that we have been able to do, the great deal that we have left undone, and the difficulties that lay in the way of our doing more and better. When I began the former series of these lucubrations, I certainly thought I could have done more in the compass of one volume than I find I have been able to accomplish in four. I did what I could to touch each subject lightly, barely to touch it, and be gone to another. I did this, just to see what so mighty a subject as the moral portraiture of the Babylon would look like, when touched in outline by one who had no motive for distorting, and no fancy to enable him to throw in ornamental flourishes—who had no style, no mannerism, as an artist,—who was, in fact, not an artist at all—who had not any school, or any reputation to support, but could address himself briefly and in plain terms, to the subject before him; and the merit of whose production, if it should happen to have any, would of necessity be in the subject, and not in the execution.

Proceeding in this way, I found myself sadly out in my calculation, as to the quantity: not only the whole subject was of giant bulk, but there was a corresponding magnitude in the very atoms and elements of which it was made up. Somebody, turning "Philosophy in sport" into "folly in earnest," as a silly author says, or should have

said, in standing sponsor for a sillier book, has remarked that, while the mud of the hollow is made up of particles so minute, that when they are dry the least breath of wind wisks them about as it lists, the granite of the mountain is made up of masses, each of which has in itself volume and weight enough for enabling it to keep its place. Just so with the Babylon—mighty in itself, the elements of it are also mighty:—the man who deals in pins is a nabob; and he who grubs up the dust in the streets, accumulates by that filthy traffic as much wealth as would purchase the fee-simple of a province. Accordingly, what I had set down, *a priori*, as matter for a line, stretched out into a paragraph; the paragraph became a chapter; the chapter swelled into a volume; and here I am, at the bourne of my labour and my ability, with the work hardly begun. I had formerly wondered at the vast discrepancy that there was between the pretended pictures of the Babylon, and that which one found it to be in the reality. If one was contented with gazing for a day, why these pictures might point out where the thoughtless might go and gaze. Here and there a bone of the body was named and haply figured, as one who is no anatomist would figure the bones of an animal, by guessing at them through the skin; but of the animating principle—the mighty mind of the Baby-

lon, there was not an indication. Now, native or foreigner, resident or visitor, that is really the only thing worthy of observation; hence it is the only thing that can stimulate thought,—that can teach the Babylon how to improve her virtues and correct her vices, and teach others how they may profit by the one and avoid the other. In attempting to do this, reader, I need not tell you that I have failed; for, long ago, you must have found out that. I have broken the ice, however, and those who are better qualified may clear the pool.

Still, I must confess that there are many things which make me regret that there are so few pages before me; for, after so much labour, I would have liked a little play,—would have been very much pleased to "make the round" of the Babylonian sights and shows, if only one kind, courteous, and listening reader should have accompanied me.

Among those shows, "The Royal Gardens at Vauxhall" are, during the time that they are open, among the most attractive to the crowd. There are several reasons for that: the visitors—though miserably in proportion to what it costs them—may eat and drink; they may go in very great numbers; they may be there without restraint; and, pleading the late hour at which the gardens close, they may make them an excuse for being at worse

places. They may, in short, do all manner of folly and wickedness, and have it concealed in the groves, or hushed by the din of squalling throats and hissing crackers, as was the case in the unholy worship of Moloch and Belial in days of yore,—slandered divinities, whose hair and virtue would have stood on end had they been requested to preside at this modern abomination.

It is hardly in human nature to imagine any thing more out of taste, and contrary to morality, than these same gardens. The situation is low and damp, and ague and catarrh constantly brood over the grounds. The trees are of the most ordinary kinds; sickly from the air by which they are surrounded, and weeping nitre and coal-tar upon you as you pass: they are not arranged as Nature would have arranged them, nor as they would have been done by any one who knew even the first element of art. They make a triple division; and one may in future say, the town, the country, and Vauxhall Gardens. They are seen by lamplight, however; by the fit and proper illumination of false beauties; by that which makes brainless apprentices and booby lords fall in love with plaster of Paris and brick-dust in the theatre, and mulct the till and the tenants, in order to pay for the demonstration of an equal lack of understanding and virtue. Then what they are pleased to call

the performances,—old punch at the crossing of a street is worth ten years of their inflictions. The people—the people, however, are the sight. They throng there,—one half of them because they are fools—eaten up by the ennui of a vacant mind, and incapable of losing it in any other way than by losing themselves; and the other half, because they are knaves—and, as such, know that there is always something to be got in a crowd. Of the thousands that haunt that den of vice and vulgarity, it would be curious to estimate how many are "well known to the police;" and how many of these are admitted gratis. At day-break, on a summer's morning, the way by which the long-lingering visitors drag off from this haunt of "pleasure," affords a singular prospect; and if it were possible to fetch there those who are to be the victims for the ensuing night, the sight might go far in enabling them to escape from the sacrifice. There, hatless and shoeless, with his coat torn and his pockets turned inside out, crawls the spruce youth of the preceding evening—the silly moth who would needs flutter round the candle of "life," and who bears so decisive marks of the singeing that it has given him. If his parents or his master happen to be austere, he dares not return to them; he cannot starve; and thus there is, almost to a certainty, one recruit more for the gallows; for

though the hearts of those from whom he came may relent, and the advertisement may at last appear, that if he returns all shall be forgotten; yet, in the meantime, he has gone too deep into the business of his new companions—has haply led them to commit a burglary upon the very house to which he is welcomed back by the advertisement; and thus the next time that they, to whom the charge of him was committed, and who were answerable for that charge, may see him, may haply be where ennui takes themselves to find "a bit of amusement" in the hall at the Old Bailey, or in the street opposite Newgate.

To the district in which it is situated, that den of folly must be an intolerable nuisance; and what with noise, bad company, and danger to person and property, it must render almost uninhabitable for the summer a place which, from physical causes, is not over and above sanatory during the winter.

All this is very bad; and yet one can hardly blame the proprietors. They did not make the taste of the town; they merely took advantage of it, upon the same principle that it is taken advantage of by others, to make the most of it. That the people should assemble among trees, however ugly and sickly, to stare at lamps and transparencies, and raree-shows, however vulgar; to

cut ham, however rancid, and drink wine, however bad, cannot be considered as iniquity in itself, nor looked upon as a matter with which the legislature have the smallest business to interfere. The fault is precisely the same as that which has converted the two great theatres—once the patrons and the pride of the drama—into a disgrace and a nuisance. (Here let no critic in syllables divide the two epithets, call the one patent theatre a disgrace and the other a nuisance, for I meant that they should go shares, and share equally in both.) About one thing, I never have *made*, and never will *make*, oath: Namely, "That it be, or be not, a covenant in the agreement of some females, that they shall be bound to suffer, behind the scenes, the attentions of any man that may be introduced to them there!" and yet there is a licenser who cuts with no sparing hand at the immorality of the men who scribble; and there are paid and unpaid, and societies for the suppression of the vices of porters and costermongers, who do drive away at their dusty delinquents like so many Phineases in holy zeal; but it seems, when once *behind the scenes*, any vice is safe and free. It is not that the authorities have been remiss and have not interfered, but for the very opposite reason: they have interfered,

have made Vauxhall, like these same theatres, a monopoly; being a monopoly, it is overgrown; and, as is the case with all monopolies of the kind, though it has overgrown upon the whole, the vice has grown one way and the virtue another.

In consequence of this monopoly, the nuisance at Vauxhall has become a thing of cost and profit sufficient to tempt the cupidity of some great capitalist, who can by his influence do that which never could have been done by persons of smaller dimensions. He is an honourable man himself, because he possesses the Babylonian test of honour—wealth: and the honour that is in him descends and honours, (or rather, if there were not a statute against coining, *honorizes*,) every thing that brings him wealth. He who worships the pool, is not likely to curse the streams that feed it; he who adores the golden calf which is made out of the wages of sin, is not likely to quarrel with that sin of which it is the wages: if the high and the noble give the hand of fellowship to him who rolls in wealth out of the returns of that which debauches the youth of the metropolis, how can they quarrel with the debauchery?

A throng is alway a certain means of concealment, and, though it be somewhat singular, it is very true, that men may hide the shame of their

very iniquities in the crowd of their number. If a private individual should be the cause of the thousandth part of the riot, excess, mischief and ruin that are day after day and season after season perpetrated at such a place as Vauxhall, the informers and the parish authorities would soon be on him, and his ruin would be speedy; but in this case those very magistrates who, some of them rich (and for their riches only sit upon the bench,) out of the profits of scenes and practices which are not yet forgotten, give their licence before the deeds are perpetrated, and their indemnity, if need be, after.

The very situation of those gardens is a cause of their profligacy. They are at one side of the Babylon; and those who attend them have to find their way home through the whole line of the streets. They have to do so at a late hour of the night, and when they are in a state of excitement —for though the wines be not genuine, it is easy to make them intoxicating. They depart therefore and spread themselves all over the city—the simple to be plundered and the vicious to plunder; and while the place is open, there is not a police office between Camberwell and Highgate, or between Knightsbridge and Bow, that has not a tale of Vauxhall to tell in the morning,—or rather, perhaps, there is not, in the whole of that wide extent,

a guardian of the night that could not tell a tale of it, if he were not bribed to be silent.

After all, it is doubtful whether the breaking down of the monopoly would mend the matter; for the speculations of an analogous kind, that have been entered into by individuals do not appear ever to have added much to the virtue of society; and many of them have had to be suppressed, as among the most abominable sinks of vice. It is very probable that gardens are not calculated for a city amusement at all, more especially an evening or a night one.. Why should they? There is an incongruity in the association; and wherever Nature is violated, morality is never altogether safe. The town is not a thing of Nature's making; and therefore Nature can never be the ornament or the amusement of it. In a town, the enjoyment must be social; and that which is called pleasure must be sensual. The day must be given to business; and bowers and avenues are not places for the night. We have a proof of this in the public parks, westward of the Babylon. They are all very well in the day-time, — though (except when the milliners come abroad to show their pattern bonnets on Sundays,) they be left to a few idlers and invalids in the immediate neighbourhood. But what are they at night? Who dares

go to see? The moment that darkness settles in, they are the dens of every vice, the theatres of every enormity. If they were properly lighted, and it were possible to obtain an efficient and incorruptible watch, they would be evening parades worthy of the city. There would be elbow room, and there would be air; and the tithe of what Vauxhall costs, would furnish them with amusements and pleasures that might be enjoyed with safety both to health and to morals. A few cracked fiddles, and voices worse cracked, yelling out from an unseemly tub, in the midst of a bawling and suffocating crowd, is not, and never can be music, —that music which elevates the mind, and leads it to virtue. But if, on a still evening, walking with your friends, where you had room to stretch your legs, and give to the body that motion which sets the mind a-thinking, and where you were neither in danger of being elbowed or robbed, the music of a choice band were to come to you mellowed by the air of half a mile, and where you saw not the source whence it were produced, it would have its effect; and were the Babylonians to take advantage of the pleasure which is actually within their reach they might produce a moral reform, and an elevation of character, of which they do not seem to have the smallest conception.

One of the greatest desiderata in the Babylon is something that shall enable the Babylonians to talk where there is something to give range to their speech; and which shall at the same time neither injure their morals, nor impair their health. Stewed up as they are during the day over their business, they do want something that shall give them a rousing in the evening; and they have no place where they can obtain that, in the way that would be most wholesome to them. The theatres are, as I have already said, equally tasteless and vicious,—Vauxhall is absolutely worse;—they are not the persons to profit by association in a tavern, because they get no new idea,—no varied impulse there, but are made to cut more deeply into the very rut in which their views are confined;—and when they have society with one another at home, they are not much better. It is very well for those who, during the day, have been collecting ideas, to meet within the four walls of a room, and rub and polish them against one another in the evening. This, I say, is all very well for fellows who are all so full of knowledge, and whim and glee, that each is bursting to speak; but it will not do for those that are quite empty,—who are dogged by the single idea of business, and trying to get away from it. They will never by any

chance get a going either in a tavern or at home; but must sink "a vast profound," not "from thought to thought," but from one absence of cogitation to another; and have nothing to which to fly for relief but low intoxication or gaming. I say "low" intoxication, not from the reputed rank of the men in society, or from the cheap and vulgar nature of their potations, for the men that sink thus low may be, and very often are, the very wealthiest in the Babylon; and that with which they in vain attempt to fill up the void that they feel in them, may be the choicest and the costliest that the Babylon can afford;—the lowness is in the intellectual excitement and the intellect itself of the parties. If pleasure—sterling pleasure—that which is to give buoyance to the spirits and nerve to the arm of a new day,—that which is to let man put his mental superiority over the world and all its cares,—that which is to make him

O'er a' the ills o' life victorious,"

and give him (and whatever the long faces may say, it is perhaps the only thing that can give him) a foretaste of mental joys, unclogged by ailing clay,—the sparkle must be upon the spirits, and not upon the wine-cup,—the inspiration must be

in that which comes from the head, not in that which is poured into the stomach; and the wine must be rather a cooler to keep down the internal ardour of the man—to moisten the wings of genius and retard its flight, than a brand to kindle into life the otherwise dull and uninflammable matter.

Now, though everywhere, and in the Babylon in particular, the wheel must be turned, this preparatory excitement which makes life life, is not to be obtained in the turning of it; and though it be much more easily and speedily caught by example, than those who have associated only with dull fellows may be aware of, yet one dull fellow never yet did strike it out of another. But of those who meet in the Babylon for the purpose of being rationally and tastefully happy, the majority come directly from the wheel; and really though they have the desire, and also the aptitude, they have not the impulse that is to put them in motion. They have it not, neither is there any place where they can get it; for every place of amusement that they can frequent is solitary and sensual.

There can be no question, that this lies at the root of a very great portion both of the misery and the vice of the Babylon,—that it cuts men off from rational and manly enjoyment as men, and forces them into those channels, of which, to a

feeling mind, the contemplation is so very unpleasant.

Nor is it the mere misdirection of the human powers,—the turning of prudence into avarice, and gaiety of heart into low debauchery, that is the worst part of this want of rational stimuli in the Babylon; for there is as much mind that runs absolutely to waste in the course of it, as might double both the wealth and the enjoyment.

The great difficulty is in finding for such a people as they of the Babylon, amusements that shall have this effect. The legislature cannot give them; for they have never, by any chance or at any time, meddled with the amusements of the people without spoiling them. Mere mercenary speculators, can as little give them, because, besides their having the same want of taste with the rest, they must follow the feeling of the multitude, and not lead it. Those who, taking it into their heads that they are wiser than all the world, (which is, by the way, one of the most infallible symptoms of folly,) come forward, from time to time, to school mankind, cannot give them; for what they propose is generally impracticable, and it is fortunate that it is so. Thus it is not easy to say what should be done; and, from this difficulty, the public stand still, and allow speculators

to come forward with nonsense that affords, and can afford, no pleasure; but which, when it has been gazed at requires the same low dissipation to banish it from the mind, as that very exhaustion of business, for the relief of which it was sought after. This consideration in part releases me from the regret that I should have otherwise have felt in its full power, at my inability to notice in detail the sights and shows of the Babylon.

These sights and shows are all very well in their way; but against the whole or nearly the whole of them there is this objection, that there is no speculation in them. Panorama or painting, whatever it may be, one is a mere spectator; the matter looked at, touches no train of thought—harmonizes with no feeling of the mind; and when one returns from them, all that one can recollect is having been there, and got an hour nearer to the grave by so being. What is wanted, is something of which they who go to it can make a part, or which shall question them on their own thinking; and hitherto, at least, that has not been obtained.

Even the British Museum, one feels marvellously little satisfaction from that. The ancient monuments and fragments are sepulchral—bring over one the melancholy of the tomb;—one cannot look

at them without two painful associations, the downfall of the people by whom they were produced, and the fact of their being stolen from the lands to which they in right belong. As for the books again, with some half-dozen of authors all battening upon them for their dinners, they put one in mind of withered leaves, on which caterpillars are in vain attempting to make themselves fat.

There is one spectacle that promises to please well, and that is the ground of the Zoological Society by the Regent's Park. The idea is a good one; because one can see a variety of animals, and walk about in the open air without that nasal offence whereby one is always afflicted in confined collections. The way in which the ground is laid out, too, is rather pretty. But there is a littleness about it. It is observedly brought close to the public road, in order that a bear and half-a-dozen monkeys on the tops of poles may act as sign-posts. If the Society were to do the thing at all, they ought to have done it properly—to have given it an air of magnificence worthy of the capital and of the country. As it is, it is shapeless and insignificant; looks as if it had been got up to enable the folks to fee a secretary and procure an annual dinner. It is in its infancy, however, and may improve; and even as it is, it is among the most rational spectacles about the Babylon.

There is another Babylonian sight that may be contemplated with the most unmingled pleasure, and that is the ground belonging to the Horticultural Society. It is no doubt far from town, being at the five mile-stone from Hyde Park Corner; but it is possible that that is as near as a very choice flower can approach to the Babylon without having its beauty injured by the thick atmosphere, and, if so, no fault is to be found with the Society. At all events they could hardly have found a finer piece of ground,—only that it is flat, and one likes ups and downs in a garden—they make it "so like life." I am not sure that a place of this kind is perfectly adapted to Babylonian taste, and I would implore of those Babylonians whose bowels yearn for all edible things that they see, diligently to eschew the fruit-room of the said Society; but any one who is fond of seeing the choicest productions of Nature in the greatest perfection, and who has a stomach that may be ridden with a curb, cannot spend a more rational or delightful hour than in these same gardens. One great beauty of them is that, being (like the Zoological grounds) private property, they can be kept select. But I have no room to begin a new subject; I must, like the Macedonian, sit down and take up my ecclesiastes, though upon far other grounds than he. He is said to have

wept because he could not conquer a second world: I, on the other hand, am foiled by a single city; and can only end as I began, by pronouncing the Babylon, the greatest, the most varied, and the most incomprehensible aggregation that ever was on the face of the earth.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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